THE PRIEST AND THE JESTER

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI

The noted Polish writer explores past and current truths in a remarkable philosophical and social essay

DISSENT

GEORGE LICHTHEIM
Reality and Appearance

H. BRAND
Disarmament and American Capitalism

PAUL GOODMAN
Format and Anxiety

EUGENE ZAMIATIN
A Letter to Stalin

SUMMER 1962 95c.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

There is a note on Leszek Kolakowski at the end of his essay. . . . H. Brand recently joined our editorial board; his articles have frequently appeared in DISSENT; he is employed as an economist. . . . Paul Goodman's latest book, *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals,* is reviewed in this issue. . . . Herman Benson is the editor of *Union Democracy in Action.* (His work on behalf of union democracy was discussed in our last issue.) . . . Philip Green is in the Politics Department at Princeton. . . . Joseph Bensman is co-author of *Small Town in Mass Society* (recently reissued by Doubleday). . . . Bernard Rosenberg, whose articles are well-known to our readers, is the author of *The Values of Veblen,* and co-editor of *Mass Culture* (The Free Press of Glencoe). . . . George Lichtheim's analyses of world affairs are highly esteemed both here and abroad. He is a contributing editor, and formerly an associate editor, of *Commentary,* and has written for DISSENT before. He lives in London. . . . Dennis H. Wrong is Associate Professor of Sociology in the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research. Random House has just reissued his *Population and Society.* . . . Ben B. Seligman's tremendous work, *Main Currents in Modern Economics: Economic Thought Since 1870,* has just been published by The Free Press of Glencoe. . . . B. J. Widick is the co-author with Irving Howe of *The UAW and Walter Reuther.* His articles have appeared in *The Nation* and other periodicals. . . . Martin Peretz is a graduate student at Harward who has written for *Second Coming.* . . . Soma Vira is an Indian student now in the United States.

DISSENT, issued July 1, 1962, is published quarterly by Dissent Publishing Association, 509 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York. Subscriptions: $3.50 for one year; $6.00 for two years; $2.50 for students for one year; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, add 50 cents mailing costs per year. All payments from foreign countries must be made by United States money orders or checks pabable in United States currency. Single copy: 95 cents. For special rates on bulk orders from organizations, teachers, etc., write directly to DISSENT. For For information on newsstand and bookstore distribution write to: Eastern News Co., 255 Seventh Avenue, New York 1, New York.

© 1962 by Dissent Publishing Association. Permission to reprint any article must be obtained from the publishers. • Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. • Entered as second-class matter at the post office at New York, New York on April 1, 1954 under the authority of the act of March 3, 1879. • Volume IX, Number 3. (Whole Number 36.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISSENT

VOLUME IX
SUMMER 1962

NUMBER 3

EDITOR
Irving Howe

EDITORIAL BOARD
Horst Brand
Joseph Buttinger
Lewis Coser
Emanuel Geltman
Norman Mailer
Henry Pachter
Stanley Plastrik
Ned Polsky
Bernard Rosenberg
Meyer Schapiro
Stephan Thernstrom
Michael Walzer

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Lionel Abel
Daniel M. Friedenberg
Erich Fromm
Paul Goodman
Michael Harrington
Murray Hausknecht
Sid Lens
Frank Marquart
A. J. Muste
Harold Rosenberg
Milton Sacks
Herman Singer
George Woodcock
Norman Thomas

A QUARTERLY OF SOCIALIST OPINION

CONTENTS

Page

JOURNAL OF THE QUARTER

A Note on South East Asia—*by S. P.* 211

Djilas and the Lies of Half-Truth—*by I. H.* 213

ARTICLES

The Priest and the Jester — *by Leszek Kolakowski* 215

Disarmament and the Prospects of American Capitalism—*by H. Brand* 236

Notebook:

Format and Anxiety—*by Paul Goodman* 252

The Sickness of the Unions—*by Herman Benson* 257

The Politics of Oil—*by Philip Green* 260

The Culture of the New Suburbia—*by Joseph Bensman and Bernard Rosenberg* 267

A French Painter Visits Moscow—*by Jean Bazaine* 270

Reality and Experience: An Analysis of the Draft Program of the CPSU—*by George Lichtheim* .. 274

A Letter to Stalin — *by Eugene Zamiatin* 285

BOOKS

To Get People Moving—*by Dennis H. Wrong* 291

His Brother's Keeper—*by Emanuel Geltman* 294

Skeletons in the Affluent Closet —*by Ben B. Seligman* 296

Politics and the Rule of Law—*by Henry Pachter* 298

How to Succeed in Bilking, etc. ...—*by B. J. Widick* 301

How Wilful Is Wayward? — *by Martin Peretz* 302

Shaping India's Future—*by Soma Vira* 304

LETTERS 306

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A MATTER OF RECORD

A series of protests have been in circulation against the imprisonment of David Alfaro Siqueiros by the Mexican government. In a letter addressed to the New York Times *it was claimed that Siqueiros had been locked up because "his ideas are said to have caused demonstrations by Mexico's desperately underpaid teachers." In the same document a Mexican art critic and collector is quoted as denouncing the "unqualified stubbornness" of the authorities in "keeping this great artist in prison for his political ideas." All the protests emphasize the image of a great artist, the peer of "Michelangelo and Rembrandt, Goya and Van Gogh," suffering behind bars for his humanitarian sympathies and his courage in expressing them.*

We have not been able to establish with certainty the nature of the action for which Siqueiros has been imprisoned. But we do know, as a matter of record, that here is no mere artist and man of ideas. If Siqueiros is famous for his paintings, he is also infamous as the ruthless Stalinist who in 1940 led a party of gunmen in a raid on Leon Trotsky's home near Mexico City. Trotsky and his wife managed to escape the machine-gun fusillade of the Siqueiros gang, but three months later the GPU agent, Jacson, who was associated with Siqueiros, successfully carried out the assignment of murdering Trotsky. In retreating from the Trotsky house, Siqueiros and his gunmen abducted Sheldon Harte, one of Trotsky's American guards—later, Harte's bullet-riddled body was dug out of the grounds of a house near Mexico City that had been rented some weeks earlier by Arenal, Siqueiros' brother-in-law.

Siqueiros, in published articles, has not only approved the assassination of Trotsky as a "revolutionary act, politically and humanly justifiable," but he has accepted responsibility for his part in it. "I must confess," he wrote, "that I regard my participation in the affair as one of the greatest honors in my life."

All this has been recounted by General L. A. Sanchez Salazar, the Mexican police investigator of the affair, in a book: Murder in Mexico, *written jointly with Julian Gorkin (Secker and Warburg, London, 1950). We learn here that Siqueiros, who was charged with the crimes, was released on bail and left Mexico. The authors say: "The charges against David Siqueiros still stand. His guilt—for nine serious offenses—has been established. But the trial has never taken place, and consequently the delinquent has not been absolved." If it is true, as seems to be the case, that the Mexican law under which Siqueiros has recently been convicted is vague and hence a tool of injustice, it is equally true that Siqueiros has been the beneficiary of legal laxity.*

We object to the law under which Siqueiros is incarcerated, not because Siqueiros is a great artist but because the law is unjust. But we object with equal vehemence to the shameful attempts of Siqueiros' friends and supporters to cover up his crimes and falsify history with the sentimentalisms of the persecuted artist and the champion of schoolteachers and of popular freedom.

LIONEL ABEL, SAUL BELLOW, ERIC BENTLEY, JAMES T. FARRELL, PHILIP GUSTON, IRVING HOWE, DWIGHT MACDONALD, ROBERT MOTHERWELL, BARNETT NEWMAN, HAROLD ROSENBERG, MEYER SCHAPIRO, DELMORE SCHWARTZ

[*This statement was refused publication by the* New York Times *to which it was addressed.*]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOURNAL OF THE QUARTER

A NOTE ON SOUTH EAST ASIA

Our fact-oriented Administration might consider the following facts in evaluating its interventionist policy in South East Asia (Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand):

- Since 1954 we have spent over $2.5 billion (by the end of this year it will be $3 billion) in economic and military aid to the government of Ngo Dinh Diem of Vietnam. The results, in terms of democratic social and economic progress, are minuscule.
- Since 1951, we have given over $500 million in aid (80 per cent of it military) to Thailand, and have built up for Thailand an Army, Navy and Air Force of 120,000 men. Where was this force when it came to insuring, in the words of President Kennedy, "... the territorial integrity of this peaceful country"?
- After expenditures of hundreds of millions of dollars in a few years' time, with the added presence of hundreds of American military technicians of the toughest fiber, 5,000 Royal Laotian troops under U. S. command and leadership were driven out of Northern Laos at the first sight of advancing Communist forces.
- We began with a few dozen military advisers in South East Asia; it grew to a few hundred technicians and experts. We now have over 11,000 men in the area (7,000 ground forces in Thailand), with a steady additional flow coming in.
- Our unconditional commitment to unpopular regimes in Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand is duplicated in South Korea, the Philippines, Formosa etc. Thanks to the stepped-up military and economic activity of the new Administration, our commitment to these governments is firmer than under the last Administration, since our "stake" in their survival is that much greater.

•

Any number of comparable and equally compelling facts can be produced. The one consistent policy which the Administration has developed is the erection of battlelines throughout Asia. The irony of Nikita Khrushchev complacently discussing America's deep involvement in South East Asia is surely lost on no one. "Go to it, dear friend," he seemed to say to President Kennedy during a recent tour of Roumania. Get deeper and deeper into that quagmire; commit larger forces and resources. You will find it has no bottom, and—this seemed particularly to amuse Khrushchev—wait until you attempt to extricate yourself! You will find that task the most impossible of all. (The establishment of a face-saving, "neutral" Laos of the Three Princes—proclaimed to have always been our basic policy in that country—finds that, in order to bolster up the agreement, the indefinite presence of our Marine forces in neighboring Thailand is indispensable).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INVITATION TO THE DANCE

> *"The Americans did not come here to dance but to help us," said the wife of President Ngo Dinh Diem's brother and chief political adviser. "If they want to dance, they should go elsewhere in Asia."*—N.Y. TIMES, *June 14, 1962.*

Perhaps the moment has come, suggests Reinhold Niebuhr in the *New Leader* (May 28, 1962), for an "agonizing reappraisal" of our Asian policies. Is not "democracy" a luxury that only advanced, non-Asian nations can afford? Dr. Niebuhr, while not explicitly giving an affirmative answer to his question and hesitating to draw any conclusion if his answer is "yes," limits himself to framing a series of basic questions:

> . . . whether it has not been a mistake to commit our prestige unqualifiedly to the defense of [such nations as Ngo Dinh Diem's South Vietnam].
> . . . whether we have been mistaken in investing our moral prestige in Asia [in attempting to shore up a series of questionable leaders].
> [Finally,] . . . one of the most pressing issues in United States foreign affairs is to determine when we must and can support the less than ideal democracies scattered throughout the world. And where the U. S. does decide to support such nations, it has to determine how much it can interfere in their internal life in order to create economic and social conditions which will make democracy available.

It is to Niebuhr's credit that he attempts to look at fundamentals. But he does not advance beyond raising questions which, in turn, are so formulated as to suggest he is at best sceptical about democracy in the countries he discusses and, apparently, thinks a "play-it-by-ear" policy from one country to the next is about all one can do. In other words, let us find out the "facts" which, in turn, reveal the power relations and forces in operation and we then act accordingly. Or precisely the policy followed by the administration to date. If the Communists advance in northern Laos, we redress the balance with Marines, etc. The obvious difficulty of this game of limited retaliation, apart from the danger of escalation, is that it leads nowhere; or as Khrushchev put it, how do you withdraw?

But more important is to examine the questions raised by Niebuhr. We cannot do that at length here, but some preliminary notes may be of use:

1) *Modesty*: What the United States does in the South East Asian crises is not, never has been and never will be decisive. At best we influence, not determine events. In the end, it was the utter indifference and apathy of the Laotians (due, by the way, not to their "Buddhism" but to their political remoteness from the forces operating) which brought about the new doubtfully "neutral" Laos. Similarly, it is the fact that thousands of the South Vietnamese elite, politically sophisticated people, are sitting on their hands and maintaining a strictly hostile attitude toward the Diem regime which will decide its future. Since these people reject the "Win with Diem" slogan of the Administration, his fate is grim.

The facts, it would seem, dictate

CORRECTION:

A typographical error in last issue's note on C. Wright Mills, seriously distorted the meaning of a sentence. The second sentence of the last paragraph should have read: "Like certain 'Wobbly' types, whom he intensely admired, he was too much of a 'loner' to bend himself to the necessary disciplines of political activity."—ED.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

caution, limited objectives and involvement, political sophistication and discernment.

2) *Democracy*: Contrary to what the sceptics say, we would contend that while democracy cannot guarantee victory over Communism, Russian or Chinese style, it alone offers the possibility of even a decent fight. Niebuhr judges something that hasn't yet been tried; which Asian country actively threatened by Communism has effective democratic and popular institutions? Not one. This does not refer to constitutions or formal democratic procedures (Diem has thousands of political prisoners in his jails). It means essentially two things: (1) Popular democratic institutions from top to bottom, from village councils to the highest court, which exist in an atmosphere of free discussion and debate; the elite of South Vietnam, for example, will come to life only if such an atmosphere should be establish; (2) The training, mobilization and arming of the village-peasant masses. If we reverse Mao Tse-tung's dictum that Communist guerrillas can only "swim" in friendly waters, we understand that only hostile waters will eject them. It need hardly be added that a successful arming of the peasantry in the Asiatic world is part of the agrarian revolution which, varying as it must from country to country and region to region, is a problem far beyond the comprehension or grasp of our Pentagon.

3) *Realism*: Many people, including some well placed in the new Administration, know these simple truths. There must be no end of confidential reports and papers which document them in details not accessible to us. For one thing, it would be helpful at least to get these things known and admitted. It would be a starting point for us to see both our limitations and what—modestly—might conceivably be accomplished by helping those in the countries we want to save who, in their turn and in ways far more perceptive than ours, have grasped the relation between the struggle for free democratic social, political and economic institutions and the struggle to prevent engulfment by Communism.

But we at least ought to begin by asking for their removal from the jails of Diem and Chiang Kai-shek.

S. P.

DJILAS AND THE LIES OF HALF-TRUTH

Milovan Djilas is in jail once more, this time because he has published, during the era of de-Stalinization, a book with unflattering recollections of Stalin. As he himself remarks, there is little new in what he says. Anyone who remembers the impressions left by Trotsky, Bukharin and other victims of the Stalin terror will find Djilas' portrait of the dictator quite familiar.

"Reasons of state" are said to lie behind Tito's decision to persecute Djilas again. These have to do with Yugoslav-Russian relations, an effort to patch a rapprochement between the Communist parties of the two countries, Khrushchev's hostility to Djilas,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

etc. Such, no doubt, are the immediate causes; but if we think in terms of limiting conditions rather than operative causes, it may be useful to suggest that a more fundamental process is at work here, a process of alternate loosening and tightening in the political repression of the Communist system.

For some years the Khrushchev dictatorship has been releasing a series of *controlled* revelations of the past. Controlled: that is precisely the point. For reasons involving the stability of the ruling elite and its relations with a people no longer cowed as it was in the past, the Russian dictatorship wishes to dissociate itself in part from the worst excesses of the Stalin terror. Yet almost in exact proportion to its need for such a dissociation, it also fears those political voices within its realm that do not confine themselves to a calculated repetition of half-truths which by virtue of being half-truths are still lies. Whole areas of the past remain unsettled; the Soviet Union finds itself in the bizarre position of not knowing at any particular moment what its history is supposed to be.

Now as the limited de-Stalinization proceeds, the internal life of Russia approaches in quality and character that of Yugoslavia. It comes, that is, closer to the model of an authoritarian dictatorship which tries to rule not by permanent terror but through a mixture of limited responsiveness to the desires of the population with an overriding commitment to its own power ambitions. If anything, there is today more political and intellectual liveliness in Russia than in Yugoslavia, for once the Tito dictatorship repudiated Stalinism it managed to establish a temporary stasis from which it has since made no significant moves toward greater freedom. Any rapprochement between Khrushchev and Tito will obviously involve common interests *vis à vis* European politics and the internal disputes among the Communist nations; but it will also, one suspects, be part of an effort to achieve stability of political rule and homogeneity of political method among those nations, an effort to avoid both the rigidity of Stalinism and the freedom proposed by the "revisionists." It will, that is, include a rough convergence of perspective as to the proper means for establishing systems of political control in the Communist world.

Djilas violates those systems. He speaks as his own man. He repeats the one truth most unpalatable to the Communist rulers: that no fundamental social change is possible in the Communist countries as long as the party bureaucracies maintain a monopoly of power and rival parties are banned. Between the party-state *as a system* and the political activity of a Djilas there is consequently an irreconcilable conflict. And to the dictators he seems more of a threat precisely as they find it expedient to abandon the terror in which they were trained.

Djilas, together with the younger Russian writers and Polish intellectuals, represents the urge among rising generations in the Communist world to break past the suffocating limits of authoritarian rule. The dictators recognize him as their enemy; free men, as their friend. I. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leszek Kolakowski

THE PRIEST AND THE JESTER*

The editors of DISSENT *are pleased to print the first English translation of this remarkable philosophical and social essay by the distinguished young Polish writer, Leszek Kolakowski, whose writing has come to the attention of serious readers in both East and West during the past several years. "The Priest and the Jester" is a work both of intellectual history and contemporary reflection; its relevance extends in both directions, toward the past and the present; beyond that, it would be superfluous for us to comment on its implications.*

We have done all we could to keep alive in our minds the main problems that in the course of centuries have troubled theologians, although today we formulate them in a somewhat different way. Philosophy has never freed itself from the heritage of theology, which means that theological questions were only awkward attempts to solve riddles that are still haunting mankind.

Riddles? It may be that what is involved is not really a riddle but, frequently, a situation into which we read a riddle because the most self-evident facts appear unacceptable to us.

Nothing is as deeply rooted in man as the belief in a moral law of equalizing temperatures, that is, the belief that the world eventually will reach a state where our merits and rewards, our crimes and punishments are levelled out, where evil is avenged and goodness rewarded—in other words, a world in which human values attain their complete realization. Whatever happens, man ought to rejoice, because the rewards which await him in heaven are generous.

Eschatology

And thus, the first question which contemporary philosophy has inherited from the theological tradition is the problem of the possibility of eschatology itself. We pose it differently: can the human values we accept attain complete realization? Does history evolve in the direction

* This essay appears in *The Modern Polish Mind,* published by Little, Brown & Co., edited by Maria Kuncewicz. The translation is by Paul Mayewski; published with permission.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of final equalization and justice? One ought not to wonder that we do pose such questions to ourselves. Reflection on history has its main *source* in our dissatisfaction with history's results; the most common *hope* of historiosophy is to bring into harmony the essence of man with his existence, that is, to create a situation in which the inalienable aspirations of human nature are fulfilled in reality. Because the attainment of such a state would put an end to dissatisfaction with the results of history, it might be said that historiosophy has adopted as the main object of its hope a situation which leads to its own extinction. At any rate, every optimistic historiosophy must inevitably, by its very nature, be a victim to suicidal tendencies.

It is not difficult to see that secular eschatology, that is, the belief in an eventual elimination of the disparity between human essence and human existence (the belief in the deification of man), naturally presupposes that "essence" is a value; that the realization of essence is desirable; and it relies on the wisdom of history to bring about this realization. Secular eschatology places its confidence in the final judgment of history. We do not laugh at it, for who does not defer to this belief? For instance, every time someone believes that the unhappiness and torment of people already dead may be avenged by history, or that centuries-old accounts of wrongs eventually may be settled justly, he demonstrates his belief in the last judgment. Every time man expects that some day the requirements of his nature will be satisfied, he professes his belief in eschatology, in the end of the world, and thus also in the finiteness of man. Since the eighteenth century, that is, from the very moment when "History" or "Progress" in Europe made their way to the throne of the violently deposed Jehovah, it transpired that they could substitute for him successfully in his basic functions. From the day that historical eschatology demonstrated its possibilities, human history became an argument for atheism: a different force took upon its shoulders the labor of God and, as He had done in the past, it could lull its unhappy subjects with the vision of a happy end.

Yet the belief in progress does not necessarily mean that one must indulge in chiliastic visions; the latter require additional presuppositions, namely, the assumption that current history can be characterized by its striving towards a lasting result, one which can be defined and which will end all conflict. It is irrelevant whether we call this result the end of history or its beginning: for every eschatology the end of the history of the earth is the end of human suffering and the beginning of the life of the blessed about which we know nothing except that it will be a state of permanent contentment.

The problem of the possibility of eschatology is one of the central issues of a discipline which may be called philosophical anthropology, and which today deals with the majority of vital philosophical questions. But theology has always been a projection of anthropology on non-human reality. In regard to the antagonisms between the natural aspirations of human essence and man's entanglement in his external fate,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

philosophical anthropology today may still search for solutions either in terms of transcendency, as do the Christian existentialists (Jaspers, Marcel), or in terms of history, as do the Marxists, or, finally, it may recognize the conflict as insoluble; the last eventuality was at one time formulated by Freud, and existentialist atheists have since put it in a different way. Independently of the arguments expressed in more or less "technical" tongues, the question itself has become common currency; and almost everyone, acting under the combined or conflicting pressures of tradition and personal experiences, has a more or less ready answer to it. In this popularized version, answers need not be theses; most often they are attitudes to life which express, if only unconsciously, a solution to the following problem: is the existence of each of us merely a collection of facts, one following another and exhausting itself within its duration, or is every fact something more than the mere content of the time which comprises it—namely, an anticipation, a hope for other facts to come, the revelation of a fragment of the final perspective of fulfillment? Is each fact an absolute reality, or is it a section of the road at whose end peace awaits us? The answer to the question is of highly practical value, for it determines whether we consider our daily chores a means of saving pennies towards a retirement pension in eternity for ourselves and mankind and therefore, perhaps, disregard current facts and such values as cease to matter when the now passes; or whether, on the contrary, we see in them only their empirical and immediately given content, and therefore tend to ignore those possibilities which may be realized only after certain preparations are made, but which require transcendent interpretation via assigning sense to each fact by relating it to something outside it. Risking the loss of current values in exchange for final values, illusory though they may be, and risking, on the other hand, the loss of greater values by pursuing current values—what, indeed, could be more banal than these two extremes between which our daily life oscillates? But this is exactly what philosophy concerns itself with, having inherited the problem from theological tradition.

Theodicy

The next matter, directly related to the first, is theodicy, also a part of theological heritage. In its modern version, theodicy deals with the rationality of history, that is, it tries to discover whether the unhappiness and suffering of the individual can find sense and justification in the universal reasons on which history rests. Traditional theodicies tell us that in the poverty of the condemned shines infallible divine justice, and that human misery reflects the glory of ultimate goodness. There is a difference between the problem previously formulated and the one posed by theodicy: eschatology assigns sense to all facts by relating them to a perspective of ultimate completion: theodicy justifies partial evil by invoking the order of a wisely construed whole, while the question of whether the ultimate completion is a justification of partial evil remains unanswered.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The problem of theodicy in its modernized version treats of "the wisdom" of history, that is, the problem of conceiving such an intellectual organization of the world in which evil, known to, or experienced by, us, discovers its "sense" and value enmeshed in the wise plans of history. Ideologies based on theodicy do not necessarily have to be conservative, although the majority of historical examples might make us think so. Strictly speaking, theodicy is always conservative where it justifies evil experienced by people independently of their own decisions; it is not necessarily conservative where it justifies evil resulting from someone's free choice. In the first instance, it is simply the ideology of the helpless; in the other, it may be an ideology sanctioning our active participation in human conflict—regardless of whether on the side of good or evil.

Theodicy belongs to the department of popular philosophy, the philosophy of everyday life; and although it is sometimes practiced in the form of historiosophical abstractions, its acceptance or rejection expresses itself also in daily, common attitudes, in that semi-conscious practical philosophy which influences human behavior. On this level, its action varies. Someone who has suffered an irreversible misfortune can find solace in the thought that God has used his suffering for some (undefined) good in the world's order; or else that nothing is wasted in human affairs, and the suffering of the individual is recorded in the bank of history, thereby adding to the account from which future generations will draw dividends. Anyone able to nurture such beliefs can certainly derive advantages from them, and there would be no reason to discourage him so long as he does not resort to them in the face of an evil or a misfortune which can still be opposed. But theodicies mostly do serve the following: the belief that, by an act of God or history, nothing in human life happens in vain is so powerful a stimulus to our inborn inertia and such a justification of our conservatism and laziness that, in practical life, it inevitably becomes a shield protecting human inertia against the pangs of conscience and rational criticism.

"Ultimately," one may say to oneself, "our fate is only a part of the universe, a fragment of the enormous whole where the suffering of the individual serves to enrich the universal good, where everything influences all, while the general order of things is maintained. Whatever evil happens, it is a sacrifice on the altar of the whole, and sacrifice is not borne in vain." Although sober observation does not support this optimism and points rather to the fact that no wages of history can balance the fate of an individual man, that the suffering of some contributes to the well-being of others, while the suffering of others serves no purpose and is simply what it is—bare suffering, that much of our life is ultimately spent in vain and there is no proof that it amounts to anything else; although, then, this unifying and balancing vision of the world finds no support in our knowledge of it, the belief is so deeply rooted in our desires for compensation that it appears to be one of the truly irresistible intellectual superstitions known to man.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The critique of this superstition would not be—we repeat—of great importance if it acted solely as a tranquilizing interpretation of matters past and irrevocable, and not also as an apology for situations that are, and whose inevitability can hardly be proved.

Theodicy, therefore, is a method of transforming facts into values: a method thanks to which a fact is not only what it appears to be to an empirical imagination, but an element of special meaning in a teleologically arranged order. This transforming of facts into values is no doubt a vestige of magical thinking, older than the speculative theologies, and presupposes the belief in the sanctifying or damning power of certain events, a belief which has no connection with the empirically-given data, while relating to intangible qualities. The assumption that our present suffering must find compensation in some good in the future presupposes faith in the secret good qualities of unpleasant events, qualities connected with the all-wise order of the universe. This belief is of the same nature as any trust in the efficacy of magical practices. Our purpose here is to point to those essential elements in which modern secular thought is also compelled, either in negative or positive terms, to answer questions inherited from theological and pretheological, that is, magical, tradition. Every belief or disbelief in a God-less history, or a God-less universe organizing its elements in a teleological unity while assigning them values independent of human notions—is a belief or disbelief in theodicy. The question about the existence of an immanent order in the universe is not futile, a fact we accept silently any time we agree to reply to it, even in the negative; this is so because a question fit to be answered presupposes a certain *raison d'être* of that sphere of knowledge from which it derives. Theodicy is thus part of contemporary philosophy; it may be called the metaphysics of values, or speculation on man's position in the cosmos, or, even, a discussion of historical progress. In all three departments, each of them a part of non-religious contemporary philosophy, the patronage of theodicy, and through it the patronage of magic, has not become obsolete.

The belief in eschatology, as well as the belief in theodicy, is an attempt to find for human life a support and validity outside that life —an absolute validity, a super-reality which any other reality lends meaning to and, in itself, does not require further interpretation by reference to something else. The absolute usually becomes a moral support because of being a metaphysical support; because, in a metaphysical structure of the world, *individua* appear as its manifestations, or its accidents, and only as such become understandable. But the role of the absolute manifests itself more directly in other matters, whose importance in the history of theology is well known and, in its modernized form, is still troubling not only philosophers, but all those who seek a rationale for their behavior.

Nature and Grace

First of all, the matter of nature and grace. In Christian history, this was one of the central preoccupations (Pelagianism, the Reforma-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion, Jansenism), along with the question of theodicy (Manicheans, the Cathari), and the idea of redemption (Monophysites, Arians, Socinians). It is not difficult to see that the problem of the relation between the responsibility of the individual and the determinants acting upon him from the outside is, in all its complexity, as much alive today as it was at the time of the Council of Trent. In its most general version, this is the problem of determinism and responsibility, i.e.: in what sense and to what degree the human individual "can" or "cannot" resist the influence of forces which, independently of him, are shaping his behavior; and in what sense is he then morally responsible for himself, or, to what degree can he place responsibility on other forces over which he has no power? There are many varieties of the problem—biological, sociological, historiosophical, metaphysical; and yet the sources of social interest in it are similar to those in the past; some of the varieties have become questions to be studied and solved empirically, losing thereby their philosophical character. Others have remained within the bounds of historiosophical or metaphysical speculation, with no great chance of being solved otherwise. In considering them, man wishes to discover to what degree certain elements, independent of him—physiological or historical—can justify him *ex post,* and to what extent they can supply him with an infallible guide to his future decisions. Above all, there has grown up around historical determinism a multitude of complex questions which compel attention as the most vital in contemporary philosophical thinking.

"We have no freedom to do this or that, but only freedom to do nothing at all. And the task which historical necessity has posed is being solved with, or against, the individual." This attitude clearly summarizes the idea of historical predestination, against which all rebellion is doomed in advance to failure; it is, at the same time, the idea of justifying acts undertaken in accordance with the inherent inevitability of history. The words quoted above are from the closing chapter of Spengler's *The Decline of the West,* but they may serve as a terse formula for a more universal tendency. All concepts pertaining to natural cycles of civilizations, such as Arnold Toynbee's, are analogous repetitions of that world vision we know from *De Civitate Dei.* The opponents of historical determinism—Isaiah Berlin, Karl Popper—are continuing, in this sense, Pelagian soteriology. Marxist literature on the matter presents various motifs, usually revolving around solutions resembling those of the Council of Trent, which can be summarized as follows: acts that are contained within the framework of determinants derived from it; nonetheless, there is no irresistible grace, and the individual is responsible for accepting or rejecting the offer to cooperate tendered by the absolute to everyone; redemption is a possibility open to all, although, on the other hand, it is anticipated that not everybody will make use of it; thus, human kind is fatally divided into the chosen and the rejected; in the absolute's plans, this division is irrevocably established, and the results are determined, and yet individuals voluntarily accede

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

either to this or the other category.

We draw these analogies not in order to ridicule an actually vital topic in philosophy, but rather to uncover the hidden rationality of theology's subject matter which, in the old version, has lost its vitality. For there is nothing surprising in the fact that certain central difficulties of any and all world concepts have a stubbornly persisting character as to their basic problems, while the actual degree of culture and the richness of vocabulary at our disposal determines the way in which we express them. Our explanations are thus directed, if at all, against that attitude of contempt which free thinkers and rationalists adopt in regard to problems that were flesh for past ages, as if we ourselves were not engaged in solving the very same questions by means of a different technique; this haughtiness is as unreasonable as derisive laughter at medieval man would be because he transported himself from one place to another by means of the horse and not the jet plane. Airplanes now serve more effectively the purpose that horses once served, just as historiosophical reflections deal more effectively with the very problems once dealt with by the medieval disputes on the Trinity and irresistible grace. Why should anyone wonder at the fact that humanity wants to realize the role which independent forces play in man's behavior? Neither is there anything strange in the desire to know not only the forces which act upon us in the form of energy transferers, but also the elementary and autonomous forces, that is, the absolute. If the absolute is a historical process, secular historiosophy simply takes over the tasks of theology which, in its old version, had become all too obviously anachronistic. Probing into the problem of nature and grace can serve a manifold purpose: it may aim at finding in the world a principle in whose authority one is able to have total confidence, and which relieves man of his responsibility and solves all conflicts for him; what is aimed at may be the highest tribunal on whose justice one relies without fear, and which will allow no harm to be done to us if we adhere to its guidance; it may also be that we want to acquire the certainty that in our lives we have chosen the better side and thus all we do is just. Some solutions to the enigma of nature and grace serve as ways of shedding responsibility, which the absolute takes upon itself; this is the Calvinist solution. Another doctrine accepts responsibility, but only under the condition that acts are performed in accordance with clearly defined rules whose acceptance inevitably must lead to effective results; this is the Catholic solution. Still others accept the principle of unconditional responsibility to the absolute, but coupled with uncertainty as to the legislator's intentions; this is the Jansenist solution. In all cases, it is assumed that the absolute possesses both the legislative and the judicial power. The object of another argument is to determine whether the absolute's decrees can be well known to man, how exactly they are known, whether—if they are known—they can be carried out, and whether the transgressor can claim ignorance of these decrees if they are not fully known. Roughly speaking, these were the questions that served as focal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

points for all theological discussions in the 16th and 17th centuries—debates on nature and grace, predestination and justification of one's faith and acts. The very existence of a principle which is the source of all obligation and simultaneously a tribunal deciding in each case whether the law was observed, was not a subject of controversy at that time; those who today reject the existence of such a principle altogether, reply in simple negative to a question theology has solved in a positive way so unequivocally that it sometimes was deemed unnecessary to spell it out.

If we put aside social conflicts bearing on the controversy over nature and grace, we can see, from the point of view of individual motivation, two contradictory tendencies: on the one hand, there is the desire to find outside oneself support for one's own existence, the desire which denotes fear of an individual, isolated life, a life relying exclusively on man's own decisions, and thus, in final terms, the desire to rid oneself of oneself, to jump out of one's skin; on the other hand, we observe fear of the unreality of one's behavior and decisions, fear of harboring within oneself an alien force that not only carries out human intentions, but is also a will undertaking them instead of man. The conflict between striving for individual self-affirmation and striving for self-annihilation—in other words, the conflict between fear of getting rid of one's self and fear of one's self—may be considered the most universal subject matter of philosophical thinking; more precisely, the history of philosophy confirms that such conflict really exists.

Let us remark in passing that the problem of original sin, very closely connected with the idea of nature and grace, also has its contemporary, although modified, form since it treats of the satanic element in man and thus also of rebellion against absolute power. In its modern version, it is the problem of utopia, that is, an attempt to break the historical absolute—power—against which any rebellion is seemingly condemned in advance to failure. The problem of redemption and incarnation also lends itself to a *sui generis* secular interpretation: it is the matter of the individual's role in history, that is, of that mechanism which allows the historical absolute to become incarnate in exceptional individuals, or, in more general terms, the question as to whether those individuals really draw their energy from transcendent sources, or rather are in themselves a spontaneous "principle of creativity" in history.

Revelation

All the above-mentioned matters bear on the relationship between man and the absolute, something historiosophy has inherited from theology. However, many important questions in the theory of knowledge also originate in the very same sources, although they are not connected with historiosophy.

The most vital among them is the problem of revelation. Capricious divinity never reveals its secrets fully, yet a dimmed reflection of its wisdom does sometimes fall on mortals, depending on how much their owlish eyes can stand before being struck blind. Revelation is simply the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

absolute in the order of perception; it is a collection of unquestionable data; it is a way of communicating with the absolute. We need revelation not so much for learning what the world is really like, as for being able to appraise other's opinions about the world. Thus, revelation is, in terms of usage, the textbook of the inquisitor. It is a granite throne from which we can mete out verdicts without risk of error, and without which our rickety skeletons could not sustain us. Propped up by revelation, we can do more than move the earth; we can stop its motion.

Revelation is the eternal hope of philosophy. And so we see that the so-called philosophical "systems" which are supposed to give us certainty in the final stage of their investigation, give it to us always at the very beginning: by force of an almost automatically accepted succession, they begin by establishing sure knowledge, the absolute beginning of all reasoning. It would seem that once the absolute of the beginning was given, so would be its end; that, once we managed to stand on solid ground, moving forward would cease to be interesting. Since we have at our disposal what is most certain and unshakable, all further thinking would be as smooth and easy as the motion of a glass ball on ice. Revelation is "the first push" given to thought, after which thought moves onwards automatically; yet it is only an apparent motion, for automatism is precisely the antithesis of thinking. Thinking, in its narrow sense which interests us here—that is, creative thinking—is a function which cannot be performed by an automaton. Philosophy is an effort to question incessantly all that appears evident, that is, to disavow existing revelations, Nevertheless, the untiring temptation to possess one's own revelation keeps on laying traps for critics; every philosophy aspiring to become "a system" questions the revelations of other systems only to establish immediately its own; there are few methods of thinking which do not tacitly subscribe to the Thomist principle whereby the aim of all motion is rest. *("Impossibile est igitur quod natura intendat motum propter seipsum. Intendit igitur quietem per motum. . . .")* The premise of this assumption is that the essence of motion is its opposite, namely, absence of motion. Motion realizes itself by annihilating itself or, in other words, motion is an infirmity or insufficiency of that which moves; motion reveals need, whereas need is the negative component of nature; therefore, the nature of all things realizes itself in fulfillment. In philosophical thinking, this principle appears as the conviction that thought moves only because it is imperfect, and only to attain perfection, immobility. Thought, as every motion, attains satisfaction and fulfills itself only when it ceases to be motion, that is, when it ceases to be. But the urgent need for finality, the need for revelation, is one of the needs most easily satisfied; that is why its seekers find it almost as soon as they become aware of the need. Once the revelation has been found and thought has reached its much desired fulfillment, philosophy begins to construct what it thinks is a "system"; in fact, however, the alleged beginning is already the end, and the structure has been given a roof at the moment when it seemed to us that we had just laid the cornerstone. Any philosophic finality is nothing but a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

substitute for revelation which, being allegedly the starting point for theologians, is, in truth, all that is needed; for, indeed, theology begins with the conviction that truth has already been given to us and its intellectual effort lies not in pitting it against reality but in assimilating the essence of something that has been totally completed.

The original key formula of secular revelation is the *Cartesian cogito:* an attempt to question all that is obvious, and all the traditional finalities, in such a way as not to allow the act of criticism and destruction to be completed before a new finality—the self-knowledge of man's own thinking process—has been attained. Descartes undertook his act of criticism fully aware that there must be a limit to criticism; that sand is usually removed to enable people to stand on solid ground. To him, critique would have been without meaning if it were not to stop at a static point, and so his critical task was to reach a point above all criticism; the goal of criticism was self-annihilation, the goal of motion was the absence of motion, a point of immobility. The exposure of the shortcomings of successive revelations was to lead to the discovery of a revelation free of shortcomings. The progress of post-Cartesian philosophy was, to a considerable degree, a succession of imitations of the same procedure; philosophers accepted *in toto* Descartes' question, thereby half-accepting his answer, while the persistent work of modifying the *cogito* formula has lasted until the present century. In particular, the entire evolution of European idealism has brought to light the basic quality of the Cartesian revelation which it shares with other revelations. Its starting point is also the point of attainment; since the awareness of the thought process is the ultimate datum of cognition, the whole of reality cannot go beyond the thought process or, to use Gilson's words, "as we begin with the immanent world, so we end with it." This seems natural: reality will always have in man's vision such nature as is inherent in the ultimate data from which he tries to reconstruct it. For to declare that certain data have the privilege of being final, is to deny the reality of everything that cannot be in some way reduced to them. If, then, the immanent world is the absolute of knowledge, it is, at the same time, all that knowledge can achieve; just as Spinoza's *causa sui,* being the starting point of the thought process, is inevitably its point of attainment, the only world whose reality can be defended. So also people for whom the physical objects of daily reality constitute the only collection of absolute data, must recognize that those data necessarily exhaust all possible data, while people who assign this character to sensory phenomena will construct the world exclusively on the basis of sensory phenomena. In the motion of philosophical thought, the absolute starting point predetermines everything else, and he who attains the absolute ceases to move; any further motion on his part is illusory, as is the motion of a squirrel running up a rotating drum.

And yet the nostalgia for revelation lives at the heart of philosophy, while the need for ultimate satisfaction has still not been extinguished in its faithful. Taine's positivism had to find satisfaction in the "ultimate

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

law" or the "eternal axiom" of reality, which discovers the unity of the universe, and to which all our knowledge must finally be reduced in some way. The great ambition of phenomenology was to present reality in the absolute and final sense, and since reality thus conceived could not be anything but immanent reality, the idealism of Husserl's late work seems to be the result of the previously mentioned inborn logic of a doctrine whose main task originally was to overcome subjectivism. The inner antinomy of this search for revelation was, in the case of Husserl, an illustration of all such analogous searches; the statement that ultimate data can have only an immanent character, whereas transcendent reality is provided, as Husserl said, with an epistemological zero indicator, presupposes that the ultimate data cannot be established without a clear concept of transcendency, while opinions about it were left in abeyance. However, the very concept of transcendency could only have resulted from that natural, precritical cognitive attitude, no results of which were to be considered. Yet it appeared now and again that the verbal definition of the original principle, which attributed an ultimate character to pure phenomena, had required an earlier use of a concept derived from outside these phenomena, thereby also requiring borrowing from certain data of natural knowledge; without them nothing could be achieved. The epistemological absolute appeared then to be as burdened with the dead weight of non-absolute knowledge as the Cartesian *cogito,* which is nothing else but a presumption of a fictitious thinker, a distilled intellectual substance, totally independent of all such content as experience and acquired knowledge have left to it. This is so because the absolute is impossible to describe without simultaneously describing its opposite, and by this very fact it betrays its fictitiousness. Every critique presupposes an object to be criticized; a thought process in which we "put in brackets" transcendent reality presupposes that the latter was given to our thought, regardless of how many "distingua" are added to the word "given."

Modern positivism has not saved itself, at least in its first phase, from the pursuit of the epistemological absolute; in declaring that finality is the proper word for the character of observation sentences, Moritz Schlick presented us with another version of the same maneuver which, in so many other doctrines, was to provide us with secular substitutes for revelation.

The problem of revelation is the problem of the existence of ultimate data. It is accompanied by another question: to what extent is conceptual thinking able to encompass and express ultimate data? This is the problem of mystery which, in contemporary philosophy, belongs as much as the former ones to the heritage of theology. In its modernized version, mystery is identical with the limits of rationalism; it covers all the questions that primarily concern the rationality of certain elementary components of perception, and certain indivisible fragments of reality itself. The deliberations of the personalistic doctrines about the non-communicable character of personality are a projection into the human world inquiry of the questions which theology addressed to divinity; person-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alism in its metaphysical version, that is, the monadology of the human world, did not attack theology, but borrowed its troubles. In this case no more than in the previous instances do we want to imply that the troubles were illusory; the question about the rationality of the indivisible whole which human personality is, is a real question. If, at one time, it was a question about the mystery of the divine personality, it was formulated in sufficiently general terms for the theoretical priority to remain in the hands of theologians; in the evolution of the very word "persona"—the mask—there took shape a difficulty which has tripped philosophers ever since. This difficulty usually is solved by means of a rather simple slogan, "personality is inexpressible"; but the slogan itself, even if true, is just as sterile as the statement that God is a mystery to mortals.

Faith and Reason

The problem of the relation between faith and reason has also reappeared in a modernized form. We concern ourselves with it every time we try to find out to what degree experience and rational thought can unequivocally resolve conflicts and what the role is of unprovable factors in our image of the world. The controversy over the unprovable assumptions of empirical knowledge on the one hand and, on the other, the existence of preferential criteria in regard to conflicting sets of experience, has inherited much from the old tradition. If certain facts cannot be integrated with a previously accepted coherent set of principles which explain our past experiences, how much within our rights are we to ignore these facts or to advance interpretations whose purpose is to align them, sometimes falsely, with the system? These are the daily troubles of scientific thinking, similar to those that occurred in the past when revelation was the skeleton which organized all our knowledge into one compact "system." At the bottom of these controversies, there lies the antagonism of the same two tendencies which were present in nearly all the above-mentioned problems: on the one hand, the integrationist and monistic inclinations, a hope, in ultimate terms, of containing the world in one formula, or at least to discover a principle that would explain the whole of reality; and on the other hand, the pluralistic urge to disregard coherence in knowledge, a lack of ambition to construe a forest out of single trees, a readiness to accept single facts as absolute even if, when confronted, they should contradict each other. It was William James who, in radical formula, expressed the anti-monistic attitude toward knowledge: if the facts contradict each other, we still can accept each of them separately, since there is no reason to suppose that one inflexible elementary law rules the universe and arranges its history. We have the right to assume that the way in which things happen varies, and that the effort to reduce variety to uniformity is most frequently futile and artificial. Let every fact be its own explanation and the general knowledge elastic enough to react separately to any situation. If, in a series of experiences, the world crumbles before our eyes like a heterogeneous mass thrown together accidentally, we have the right to assume that the world's structure is precisely what it seems—chaotic, free of uniformity and order, full of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accidents, more akin to a garbage heap than a library where every item has its clearly defined place and where everything has been inventorised.

And yet this obsession with monism, the stubborn passion to arrange the world in accordance with a single unifying principle, this search for a magic formula to make reality decipherable, proves to be more lasting than all the other adventures of man's intellectual development. Philosophy itself favors it; each epoch which prides itself on having created a great scientific synthesis seems to reveal more and more of an orderly world—while presenting us with more and more general principles, compared to which all those known before appear incidental. Thus philosophy, especially since it has developed the aspirations of a scientific discipline, eagerly calls upon science to bear witness to its ventures. But when it tries to renounce its monistic hopes, it does just the opposite—it denounces science and explains that a scientific vision of the world is not a reconstruction of an organization actually inherent in the world, but the result of just such natural propensity of the human mind.

All the above-mentioned examples are nothing but attempts to justify theology not by rebuilding its whole structure systematically, but by illustrating some of its subjects; these examples were drawn from the speculative theology of scholasticism. But the wealth of mystic theology was not lost either, and it retains its splendor in contemporary thought.

The Heritage of Mystic Theology

The problems of mystic theology are particularly alive in the following four departments of modern philosophy: the practical interpretation of knowledge; dialectics; the explanation of the world in terms of the whole; and finally, in matters relating to the substantial character of the first reality.

With regard to the first, one ought to note that the mystics were pioneers in the field of the pragmatic approach to knowledge. Because the qualities of the absolute elude the investigation of the instruments at the disposal of human speech, which is used only for describing finite things, the only concept our knowledge has of the absolute is of a practical nature. In the strict sense of the word, this knowledge does not say what the qualities of God are, but instructs us as to the best way of paying homage to Him and how, by self-renunciation, one can approach His glory. Moreover, this knowledge is not so much a series of prescriptions one can learn by heart before applying them in practice, as the actual application of them; reason does not precede will but rather the acts of will become simultaneously acts of understanding; our knowledge of God is as great as the love we give Him.

Advanced by the first pragmatists and still retaining its force, the practical interpretation of knowledge is a generalized version of the mystics' program: let us ignore the question of what the world looks like "in itself" and accept instead scientific theories as practical guidance for our behavior under certain circumstances. Pragmatism rejects as irrelevant all queries about the nature of reality, and substitutes for them practical questions.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The second guardian of the properties taken over from mystical theology is dialectics. We know that the attempts to apply everyday concepts to the absolute existence have led to antinomies, hence the mystics became masters of a thinking which proceeds by thesis and antithesis; to say that no categories of human speech apply to God is to say that every time we speak of Him all categories apply to Him; thus God is and is not, He is all and nothing, maximum and minimum, affirmation and negation. In the mystical texts we also find the modern idea of alienation, as well as the idea of the world's development through its own negation. Alienated from its source, the world, an emanation of God, being finite, is the negation of its source. But in its reverted motion it tends to annihilate itself, and again become identical with its genesis; this vision of Erigena contains in itself almost all the rudiments of dialectical logic. As in Hegel's logic, alienation in mystical theology did not have to be a negative phenomenon: the absolute secretes its theophanies by force of the fatality of its own nature, and by secreting them becomes, so to speak, enriched because it can regain them anew. Likewise, original sin and the fall of man can be considered a necessary phase previous to man's future happiness to which he can look forward because of his Savior's act of redemption: *"O felix culpa quae talem ac tantum meruit habere redemptorem"*—thus speaks the well-known medieval song; blessed be the sin which deserves such a savior.

Historiosophical reflections on progress which fulfills itself through its "negative aspects," and on alienation by which man is enriched as he overcomes it, are variations on the same theme.

As the third accomplishment of mystic theology from which contemporary thought has borrowed, we mentioned questions dealing with the unifying interpretation of existence. Thus the theory of "Gestalt" appears in mystical texts in an almost perfect, although somewhat generalized, form, the modern equivalent of which can be found in Bergson's speculations rather than in the methodology of the "Gestaltists." A really independent existence is the prerogative of the absolute only; all the finite fragments we distinguish in the universe, and the differences between separate things, are either a kind of pathological alienation which awaits its end in the universal return of the world to the absolute's womb, or else a deformed product of our imagination, which tries to impose upon an indivisible whole a principle of multiplicity and differentiation completely alien to it.

Also the mystical problem of applying the concept of substance to the absolute has begun to flourish anew in our century. The question as to whether the original reality has the character of substance, or whether its substantialness is a secondary phenomenon, an attribute of our perception, or even its creation, whereas the original reality is something not substantial—event, relation, act—this question is obviously of theological origin. The questioning of the idea of substance in favor of the metaphysical priority of other principles which were traditionally considered secondary predicates, has, in our century, appeared in theories which are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

otherwise completely different: Giovanni Gentile's actualism, Alfred Whitehead's and Bertrand Russell's theory of events, and Natorp's theory of relation—to mention only three cases, each of a different origin—all meet at a certain, quite distant, point in their genealogy, a point which, to each of these philosophers, would seem totally alien to his thought. But every one of us has spiritual ancestors whose portraits he prefers not to display in the family dining room, though much malicious gossip goes on about them among the neighbors. Besides, we ourselves do not deny that our deliberations at this moment are somewhat reminiscent of the famous *Liber Chamorum*; in this case, however, the author has no intention of removing himself from the disreputable register.

II

Our list so far has been merely a loose collection of cases with one common feature; this was to show that many basic problems which are today considered by various philosophical doctrines—sometimes diametrically opposed to each other—as well as by "everyman's" philosophy, which always revolves around the same questions as "technical" philosophy, are a continuation of theological controversies, or rather a new version of the same prepositions which, in the original and less elegantly phrased version, we have known from the history of theology. And yet, led by the very same instinct which, as was said, lies at the bottom of the monistic tendencies of the human mind and gives birth to monistic interpretations of reality, we also want to formulate a coordinating principle which will permit us to span the conflicting views of the world in a systematic way.

The majority of the cited examples revealed that there exists in philosophy an antagonism centering on the same scheme: for or against eschatology, that is, for or against the ordering of the facts of current life by reference to the absolute which eventually is to be realized; for or against theodicy, that is, for or against seeking justification in the absolute for every individual evil in this world; for an interpretation of man in the categories of grace, or rather, in the categories of nature, that is, for or against assigning to the absolute all responsibility for our actions; for or against revelation, that is, for or against seeking a principle of knowledge that is permanent and inaccessible to criticism, and which gives us the guarantee of infallible thinking; for or against the monistic concept of knowledge, and thus, for or against striving for intellectual power over reality by way of possessing a code of supreme and elementary laws explaining everything; for or against the unifying interpretation of the world, and thus, for or against such vision as lends every thing a meaning by referring it to the absolute, a manifestation, a part, or an accident of which it constitutes. In short: for or against the hope of finality in existence and knowledge, for or against seeking support in absolutes.

We have tried to present the nature of this conflict as a constant struggle between two summarily defined but essential tendencies to which philosophy tries to lend a discursive character; a situation in which the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human individual can rely only on himself, a situation in which he cannot "define" himself and identify himself absolutely with anything else. Such a situation breeds fear which finds expression in man's seeking support in the absolute reality, and thus in self-annihilation; in man's seeking for himself and his acts a definition which refers him to something he is not; on the other hand, there is the affirmation of the individual existence as an irreducible fact, and thereby the rejection of all reasons justifying individual existence, the refusal to accept any absolute reality, the refusal to recognize immobility as the genuine nature of something that is mobile, the refusal to consider the prospect of finality.

Philosophy and Absolutes

And to what peculiarities of human nature—to use this much abused term—ought one to ascribe that indestructible tropism towards absolutes, that hope for the revelation of one, ultimate principle which would explain the whole world and shoulder the burden of man's existence, behavior and thought?

There are various doctrines explaining the hunger for self-definition by reference to the absolute, a feeling which may well be hunger for nonexistence. Theologians have long tried to convince us that it is the creator-given-and-oriented gravitation that rules man's thought; they call it natural religious feeling. This, however, is equivalent to justifying one's own doctrines by facts whose acceptance must be preceded by the acceptance of the same doctrine you try to justify. And anyway, by what right are we to call religious feeling something that may just as well manifest itself outside all that which both in our daily life and in science we commonly term religion? I think we ought to define religion before we speak of *homo religiosus*; otherwise we may fall into a trap—a common one, to be sure—and define religion through religious feeling, characterizing the latter in a way which presupposes the knowledge of what religion is. It would be simpler, would it not, to view religion as we know it in its historical formulae, as an instance of a more universal phenomena which may also occur outside religion.

But even if we disregard this one, we still have at our disposal a whole series of other explanations which are merely different ways of expressing the same thought, and which, unfortunately, give rise to all too many doubts to be satisfactory. Let me mention four such attempts:

One of them, formulated by Freud, and later ignored on the whole by his disciples, is the theory of the death instinct, i.e., the theory in accordance with which there exists in animated matter a constant nostalgia for reverting to the inorganic state, a constant tendency to reduce tensions and, ultimately, to liquidate them entirely—in other words, to discontinue organic processes altogether. The death instinct thus would be hostile to the libido, and at the same time explain the striving of the mind to discover in the world such principles as would reduce personal forms of existence to impersonal ones.

Another doctrine has long been known in its methodological (Ock-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ham), as well as theological (Malebranche) and physicalist (Maupertuis), version; Avenarius and the empirio-critical group have investigated it in detail; it is the principle of economy. In its summary metaphysical shape, this principle implies that in nature—and thus also in the behavior of organisms and in thinking—there is a latent tendency to maximal reduction of effort and the use of the simplest means. Freud's theory may be considered as the economy principle specifically applied to the organic world. The principle of economy, as the principle of the natural tendency of all systems to equalize tensions and differences, might also help to interpret man's thinking in an attempt to reduce *individua* to an undifferentiated absolute, an attempt to explain monistic realities.

The third possibility, one formulated in the "Gestalt" theory, is the principle of simplification, according to which all "Gestalt" systems or entities have an inborn tendency to acquire forms as simple, regular and symmetrical as possible. This principle is again another version of the principle of economy, and can be used in this case for similar purposes.

As the fourth possibility on the list, we quote Sartre's formula maintaining that existence "*for* itself," that is, human existence—defined as pure negativity in relation to the rest of the world, freedom but a freedom-*privatio*—is imbued with a constant and contradictory desire to be transformed into an existence "*in* itself"; it would like to shed the nothingness which torments it, but nothingness, that is, freedom, is at the same time precisely what defines human existence; to want to shed nothingness, to return to the world "in itself," is therefore tantamount to annihilating one's self as individual existence, and thus simply annihilating the existence itself.

All the explanations above represent, as one can see, translations of the same thought into four different tongues. They all give rise to doubts and difficulties. Both the theory of the death instinct, and the principle of economy, as well as its kindred versions, are attempts to raise (or, if one prefers, to lower) the principle of increasing entropy to the dignified level of a universal metaphysical theory, applicable not only to all forms of energy that are known and presumed, but also to human behavior, feeling and thinking. If this principle of universal tendency to equalize tensions and liquidate irregularities and differences were to be accepted, it would be possible to interpret the history of philosophy within the principle's framework, and all the previously mentioned forms of nostalgia for the absolute which have given substance to philosophical life for centuries would simply be individual cases of its line of action. The very essence of philosophical research could be derived from the same propensity human thought shares with all the other systems of energy. The content of the different metaphysical doctrines would have its basis in the processes of energy transformation on which the human brain depends. And the strong links between conservative thought in the philosophic sense, and social conservatism and that inertia of public life which we call reaction, would be still another individual illustration of the said principle.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Conflict as Principle

However, had such a principle governed human thought exclusively, it never would have caused the previously mentioned chronic conflict in philosophy which, to our mind, effectively directs its course: a conflict between the search for the absolute and the urge to escape from it, between the fear of oneself and the fear of destroying oneself. As things now stand, thought which is subject to the process of increasing entropy, that is, conservative thought, has been opposed in the course of intellectual history by a mode of thinking which exemplifies reverse processes, processes of increasing tension. In all fields of culture, in philosophy as much as in art and custom, there always has been present an antagonism whereby everything that is new derives from an unceasing need to question the existing absolutes. Although every new form of thinking that tries to disassociate itself from the accepted absolutes, establishes, sooner or later, its own final absolutes, and although every rebellion against accepted truth eventually passes into a conservative state, it prepares the ground for a new phase in which its own absolutes become in turn the object of criticism. Can any mode of thinking, even the most radical, escape this fate? All historical examples make us doubt it; besides, the hope of formulating such a mode of thinking would mean a hope of achieving an ultimate method contrary to its very premises. In this regard, the history of ancient skepticism provides a highly revealing example: a doctrine which assumed the function of questioning all accepted truths and dogmas became itself an atrophied and barren dogma of questioning; the critique of the immobility of all accepted principles became the immobility of universal criticism; for no principle of universal criticism is safe from the antinomy of the liar.

And so we do not know of any absolutely elastic ultimate method which history could not threaten with ankylosis. We know only of methods which retain vitality because they have managed to develop instruments of self-criticism. It is our opinion that there is more than one method which creates instruments to criticize itself over a relatively long period of time: in our century, we believe that this has been attained by Marxism and by phenomenonology and psychoanalysis. To state this is not tantamount to accepting the various and contradictory propositions these methods contain. The statement is only meant as a recognition of the ability of these methods to go beyond the absolutes they advance, and to detect the hidden premises of their own radicalism; in this lies their chance to live not only as congregations of perennially acquiescing believers, but also as thinking organisms capable of further evolution. Although within each of them there exists a current of orthodoxy and a group of people who know only how to repeat invariably the original formulae, each one of them has also produced offspring capable of life. The other "great doctrines" of the 20th century, such as the philosophy of Bergson, for instance, never went beyond this initial phase and have remained in history as closed systems that may claim admirers but no offspring.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Priest and Jester

The antagonism between a philosophy consolidating the absolute and a philosophy questioning the accepted absolutes, appears to be incurable, as incurable as the existence of conservatism and radicalism in all areas of human life. It is the antagonism of a priest and a jester; and in almost every historical epoch, the philosophy of the priest and the philosophy of the jester have been the two most general forms of intellectual culture. The priest is the guardian of the absolute who upholds the cult of the final and the obvious contained in the tradition. The jester is he who, although an habitué of good society, does not belong to it and makes it the object of his inquisitive impertinence; he who questions what appears to be self-evident. The jester could not do this if he himself were part of the good society, for then he would be, at the most, a drawing-room wit. A jester must remain an outsider; he must observe "good society" from the sidelines, for only then can he detect the non-obvious behind the obvious and the non-final behind what appears to be final. At the same time, he must frequent good society so as to know what it deems holy, and to be able to indulge in his impertinence.

The jesting role of philosophy was mentioned by Georges Sorel in connection with the Encyclopedists—but in pejorative terms; a jester was merely a toy of the aristocrats. Yet, although it is true that philosophers entertained monarchs, their antics had their effect in earthquakes. There can be no agreement between a priest and a jester, unless, as it sometimes happens, one becomes transmuted into the other. (It happens more often to a priest; so Socrates became Plato.) The philosophy of the jester is a philosophy which in every epoch denounces as doubtful what appears as unshakable; it points out the contradictions in what seems evident and incontestable; it ridicules common sense and reads sense into the absurd —in other words, it undertakes the daily toil of the jester's profession along with the inevitable risk of appearing ludicrous. Depending on time or place, the jester's thought can oscillate between the various extremes of thinking, for what is holy today was paradoxical yesterday, and absolutes revered at the Equator may be a sacrilege at the Pole. The jester's attitude is an endless attempt to reflect on the various arguments of contradictory ideas: an attitude dialectical by its very nature; simply to overcome what is because it *is*. A jester does not jeer out of sheer contrariness; he jeers because he mistrusts the stabilized world. In a world where allegedly everything has already happened, the jester's contribution is an always active imagination which thrives on the resistance it must overcome.

It was Fichte's admirable observation that thought cannot function without overcoming obstacles, just as a car cannot start on ice, or an airplane in a vacuum. For the same good reason, a philosophy must be regarded as illusionary if it is reduced to pure auto-reflection or else contained in the closed world of a monad. The assumption that the subject can be identical with the object in the act of perceiving, is contradictory; to presuppose such an identity is tantamount to presuming immobility,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a situation where no perception is possible. If, then, philosophy undermines the absolute, if it rejects the uniformity of the principles to which reality can be reduced, if it affirms the plurality of the world and the mutual non-reducibility of things, thereby affirming human individuality, it does not do so in the name of monadology, or in the name of the concept of the individual as a self-sufficient atom; because the affirmation of individuality is possible only in contradistinction to the rest of the world, in its relation to the world: relations based on factual dependence, responsibility, resistance.

A philosophy which tries to do without the absolute and without the prospect of completion cannot, by its very nature, be a consolidating structure, for it has no foundations and desires no roof; its function is to undermine the existing foundations and pull down the roofs. In the intellectual life it has all the vices and virtues of an indiscreet person whose sense of respectability has not developed. That is why in certain epochs the conflict between the philosophy of the jester and that of the priest resembles a contest between the irritating features of adolescence and the irritating features of senility. The difference is this: only the former are curable.

Someone might say that our reasoning tends to submit to the temptation of the very same monistic thinking it criticizes, that it betrays a tendency to submit a multitude of facts to one ordering principle. But it is not the ordering of facts that is contrary to the anti-absolute philosophy. Order can be a handy slogan for the police as well as for a revolutionary. There is only one kind of order hostile to an anti-absolutist philosophy: an order which has formulated fully the plurality of existing worlds; an order which has tasted the satisfaction of a fully accomplished task. A policeman's ideal is the order of a comprehensive dossier; while the ideal of the philosopher is the order of an active imagination. Both the priest and the jester violate the mind: the former by strangling it with catechism, the latter by harassing it with mockery. At a royal palace there are more priests than jesters, just as in a king's realm there are more policemen than artists. It does not seem possible to change this. The preponderance of the believers in mythology over the critics seems inevitable and natural: it is the preponderance of a single world over many possible worlds; it is the preponderance of the simplicity of fall over the complexity of climbing to the top. We have observed the validity of this preponderance when, with astonishing speed, new mythologies replace old ones. In the intellectual life of societies, wherever the machinery of traditional beliefs has gone rusty, new myths flock into being, created *en masse* from technological progress and scientific achievements. Thousands find consolation in imagining friendly inhabitants of other planets one day coming to the earth to solve the problems human kind cannot cope with; for others, "cybernetics" raises the hope of solving all social conflicts. A rain of gods is falling from the sky on the funeral rites of the one God who has outlived himself. The atheists have their saints and the blasphemers are erecting chapels. Perhaps the desire for the absolute, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

striving to equalize tensions, must embrace a disproportionately larger number of units in the system than the increase of tensions, if the whole is not to blow up. If this is so, then the existence of priests is justified, although this is no reason for joining their ranks.

Priesthood is not merely the cult of the past as seen through contemporary eyes, but the survival of the past in unchanged shape. It is thus not only a certain intellectual attitude to the world, but, indeed, a form of the world's existence, namely, a factual continuation of a reality which no longer is. In the attitude of the jester, on the other hand, there materializes that which is only a possibility and which, in him, becomes real before it becomes factual. For our thought of reality is also part of it, no worse than the other parts.

We declare ourselves in favor of the philosophy of the jester, that is, for an attitude of negative vigilance in the face of any absolute. We do not do this because we want to argue; in these matters, a choice is an appraisal. We declare ourselves in favor of the non-intellectual values inherent in an attitude the perils and absurdities of which we know. It is the option for a vision of the world that provides prospects for a slow and difficult realignment of the elements in our human action that are most difficult to align; goodness without universal toleration, courage without fanaticism, intelligence without apathy and hope without blindness. All other fruits of philosophy are of little importance.

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI was born in 1927 in Radom. After studying philosophy at Lodz University he held various teaching positions at Lodz and Warsaw Universities. In 1954 he became professor of history of modern philosophy at the latter, and concurrently taught at the Institute for Training of Scientific Workers, a secondary school maintained by the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Communist Party. During this time he also edited Po Prostu, *a weekly for young Communist intellectuals. In 1955 the magazine was officially censured for its deviation policy—it had been especially critical of the "new class," the bureaucracy, and its police methods. In 1957 the magazine was suspended and was never revived. Kolakowski became editor in chief of the bimonthly* Studia Filozoficzne *(which succeeded* Myśl Filozoficzna*) but gave up this post in 1959 though he remained on the editorial board. His essay, "The Priest and the Jester," originally appeared in* Tworezosc *and gave rise to much critical discussion among Communist thinkers. He is also author of* On Karl Marx and the Classical Definition of Truth *(1959), delivered as a lecture at Tubingen University, West Germany;* The Individual and the Infinite; World Outlook and Daily Life; Responsibility and History *(published in the French* Les Temps Modernes*). He is presently living in Warsaw.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

H. Brand

DISARMAMENT AND THE PROSPECTS OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM

"The basic problems facing the world today are not susceptible to a military solution." — JOHN F. KENNEDY.

The problem of disarmament goes to the roots of society. Military force has been the right arm of the nation-state; it is as yet difficult to discern the power bases that will replace it. The social investment that both Russia and America have in the cold war and the arms race is vast and mere policy decisions cannot change this fact. They can at best cap a lengthy process rendering that investment obsolete, a drag on society.

Weapons technology has already made a military establishment based on nuclear arms a danger rather than an aid to the defense of the state. A major war, deliberately staged, is inconceivable. Yet the arms race, if continued, can lead to a kind of neo-barbarism.

Disarmament—and we think of it as a process, not a zero level of arms—requires an internal realignment of political forces. This realignment will not be definable in traditional and historically outdated terms of "liberal" or "conservative." Its exact terminology will evolve in time. It would, in America, bring to full dominance the internationally oriented sector of American capitalism, although this would be but one feature of it. The very web of American society will need to be rewoven if disarmament is to become a reality.

The obstacles inhibiting this realignment and, with it, disarmament, loom at present as far more formidable than the pressures promoting it. Yet long-term factors favor these pressures. Let us evaluate the two contending sets of forces.

I

The arms race is continuing; because of the tremendous research effort related to it, it is also accelerating. For this the Kennedy Administration bears a major share of responsibility. The Administration has no clear notion of national power in this era (nor has anyone else); in effect, however, it has defined national power largely in terms of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enhanced nuclear prowess combined with a nebulous "limited war" capability.

From its very inception, the Administration has stepped up the defense budget. Defense spending authority proposed in President Eisenhower's last budget (for fiscal year 1962) was pegged at $46.3 billion, up $366 million or less than 1% from fiscal 1961. Kennedy, two months after his inauguration, proposed a $2.7-billion increase, nearly 70% of which was to improve the strategic deterrent. Subsequent boosts have lifted fiscal 1962 defense spending authority to $52.4 billion, for a total upward revision from the last Eisenhower budget estimate of $6.1 billion (or 13%).

Over the 6-year period 1955–61 (the former year being the first post-Korean year unaffected by Korean-war outlays), the rise in the defense budget amounted to $5.3 billion. In fiscal 1963 (starting July 1, 1962), defense spending authority is slated to rise another $2.1 billion to $54.7 billion. Thus, Kennedy has raised the defense budget over half again as much in his one year in office as Eisenhower did in seven.

It is hard to see a basic difference in strategic concept between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. The latter's emphasis on more "limited warfare" forces does not represent such a difference. Eisenhower intervened—successfully—in Guatemala, sent troops to Lebanon, and kept ample numbers of military aides in Laos and Vietnam. The invasion of Cuba did not fail for lack of a "limited warfare" capability, and the wall in Berlin was built despite the presence of American tanks and reinforcements all over Western Europe. The Kennedy Administration has, moreover, stated that it will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons should conventional ones prove inadequate. Thus, the danger of "escalation" from "limited" to nuclear war is clearly postulated and forewarned against.

The major share of the Kennedy Administration's increase in the defense budget provides for the purchase of 1200 bombers, 1200 land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, and an eventual total of 41 Polaris submarines, carrying 656 missiles. Procurement for the Army, including mostly conventional weaponry, amounted to $5.4 billion in the 1961 fiscal year (under Eisenhower). Already during the first six months of fiscal 1962, it ran to $3.4 billion, 58% ahead of the same period the year before.

"When is enough enough?" asks Hanson Baldwin, the military expert of the New York *Times* (January 21, 1962). "We are buying more strength in nearly all areas of military power and the Kennedy buildup started from a plateau which the present Administration now admits was higher and stronger than that of any other power in the world. What . . . is the plateau, the long-range policy to which our defense buildup is geared?"

The "plateau" is probably no longer determined by objective considerations of the strategy of deterrence. Nor is it likely that a strategy of "preemptive attack" is seriously being contemplated in responsible quarters, although Baldwin maintains that its advocates "are still strong."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rather, by raising the defense budget, the Administration probably hopes to facilitate the rapid centralization of the military establishment under closer civilian control while at the same time appeasing the vociferous right wing among the military and its powerful allies in industry and Congress. This thesis is not unreasonable considering that it is typical for this Administration of skilled ward politicians, preoccupied as they are with preserving "national unity," to make even costly concessions in order to gain desired objectives. The concessions often imperil the objective itself, a circumstance which reflects the thinness of the Administration's political bases, and not mere weakness of principle.

We cannot delve into the reasons which have given rise to the need to reorganize and centralize the armed forces.. (The obvious basic one is the evolution of military technology since World War II.) Everywhere on the globe today the trend toward reorganizing and centralizing the military is observable, partly no doubt because the military can no longer be permitted to be a state within the state. Kennedy, however, embarks upon this undertaking in a self-defeating manner.

Kennedy's policies have, of course, greatly strengthened the military-industrial complex. Hence, politically, tighter civilian control over, and greater centralization of, the military must remain inconsequential. They are condemned to remain administrative devices. They cannot affect in any fundamental sense the relationship of power between the White House on the one hand, and the Pentagon and its allies in Congress and industry on the other.

To sum up: The great increases in arms spending under President Kennedy do not bode well for disarmament and belie much of the talk about it. A moratorium on such increases--a "finite deterrent" such as Eisenhower seems to have envisaged rather than a growing "overkill" capacity—this would appear to be a basic condition for a genuine disarmament policy.

On the other hand, Kennedy's defense boosts are largely related to considerations of internal military politics rather than to changes in strategic concepts. Greater civilian control of the armed forces could heighten the chances for disarmament, were such control not being bought at a price which may neutralize those chances. For larger defense spending further extends the economic and social roots of the military and of the industries on which the arms race is based.

II

Defense spending is a major prop, better: it is an integral part of the American economy. Therefore, it is also a key factor in preserving the social and economic *status quo* in this country. By absorbing a large share of the social surplus, it helps maintain--or prevents any serious decline in—the high prevailing levels of profits, equity values, interest rates, and prices. Hence, it also helps mitigate the aggravation of such problems as chronic unemployment, widespread poverty and deprivation, and low levels of public investment. Hence also, it prevents (or delays)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the political reactions and changes which must precede a solution of these problems.

This, then, is a basic institutional aspect of defense spending in the U. S., one that exists parallel to, but is also a part of and conditions, the world situation which has given rise to the vast military establishment here.

According to the United Nations Report on the Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament, defense spending represents the equivalent of nearly three-fifths of average annual expenditures for fixed capital in the U. S. (including outlays for plant and equipment, public works, residential construction, and the like). No other country anywhere spends such an enormous proportion of its wealth for military purposes.

Notwithstanding high and rising defense spending, economic advancement in the U. S. has lagged seriously since the early fifties. Joblessness has steadily become more intractable; the labor force has virtually ceased to expand despite the growing number of persons of working age.

The technical-economic effect of defense spending has probably been to exacerbate gradually the disproportions in the U. S. economy. Partly, this is ascribable to the changing character of military technology, discussed below. Partly, it is due to the strong impetus defense spending has given to the expansion of the unproductive sectors of society—whether in the military apparatus itself or in defense-related research. Such expansion "creates" jobs, but not productive wealth. It entrenches class and other vested interests and stymies social development.

•

Unlike former stages of military technology, the present one is based on a relatively narrow range of industries. In earlier periods, the direct effects of defense spending were fairly broadly diffused and gave rise to a wide gamut of heavy capital goods investments. Not so today. We have to rely on the theoretically demonstrable but statistically unproven concept of the income multiplier to argue the global effects of defense spending.

In the past, Europe's defense effort was comparatively great, yet Europe enjoyed long periods of economic growth; America's defense effort was small, yet it, too, enjoyed growth. Now, Europe's defense effort is small, America's is vast, but where Europe has been blessed by an extended boom, America's growth has remained stunted since the early fifties.

In the following analysis, we shall attempt to resolve these apparent contradictions, but in a necessarily speculative vein. We shall deal with: (1) the primary impact of defense spending; (2) its possible (or probable) "secondary" impact via the income multiplier; (3) the profound industrial shifts which changing military technology has occasioned; and (4) its significance in terms of social politics as translated by the Federal budget.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(1) The primary impact of the defense effort on U.S. industry is summarized concisely in Table I.

Table I . . . Output Used by the Military as Per Cent of Total Output of Industry

Industry	*% of output for military*	*Industry*	*% of output for military*
Chemicals	5%	Ships & boats	61%
Nonelect. mach'y	5%	Ordnance	100%
Fabric. metals	8%	Instruments	20%
Fuel & power	7%	Transportation	6%
Petroleum	10%	RR & trucking	5%
Primary metals	13%	Trade	1%
Iron & steel	10%	Service, etc.	1%
Elec. machinery	21%	Business services	4%
Radio & communic.	38%	Prof. & serv. industries	2%
Trans. equipt. & ordnance	38%	Construction	2%
Aircraft & parts	94%	TOTAL INDUSTRY	6%

Source: *Economic Impacts of Disarmament,* U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, p. 25.

The table has the advantage of not only showing given industries' output for direct sales to the military but, being based on input-output analysis, of also reflecting their *indirect* contribution to the defense effort. It has the drawback of using 1958, a recession year, when non-defense output of metals and machinery was depressed, and the share of defense in these industries' business was abnormally large; procurement was considerably accelerated at the time. However, this circumstance affects the relative magnitudes to probably only a minor degree. These clearly demonstrate the highly concentrated impact of defense in aircraft and electronics and ships and boats.

"In the U. S.," states the U. N. *Report* already referred to, "owing to the concentration of military expenditures in a limited number of industries, only a few industries would be affected sharply by reductions in military demand. . . . Over four-fifths of the decline in employment [resulting from complete disarmament] would be in four industries—aircraft and parts (which includes missiles), radio, ordnance, and ships and boats" (page 44).

(2) The aircraft and electronics industries are characterized by (a) high labor intensity when compared to other, especially hard goods, industries, as well as relatively low capital expenditures; and (b) a high component of professional personnel (engineers and scientists) in their occupational makeup.

Table II shows, for a few selected industries, value added and capital expenditures calculated on a per-employee basis. It is evident that value added per employee in aircraft and parts as well as in radios and related products—both heavily oriented towards missile produc-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion—runs considerably below the average for all manufacturing. Interesting, too, is the fact (not shown in the table) that the latter average for value added rose 25% in the 1954–59 period, while that for aircraft rose only 12%.

Furthermore, capital expenditures per employee in both these industries is far below the manufacturing average and, in fact, neither they nor value added can begin to compare with the true work horses of the economy, e.g., chemicals, motor vehicles, steel—nor even with such more labor-intensive industries as nonelectrical machinery and food.

Table II . . . VALUE ADDED & CAPITAL EXPENDITURES PER EMPLOYEE IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES, 1959

Industry	*Value added per employee*	*Capital expenditures per employee*
Food & beverages	$10922	$ 622
Textile mill products	6045	321
Basic chemicals	21077	1948
Steel	13459	1248
Nonelectrical machinery	10308	426
Motor vehicles	14496	630
Aircraft & parts*	8767	318
Radios & related products*	8178	386
Scientific instruments	10094	325
ALL MANUFACTURING ESTABLMTS.	$10025	$ 561

Source: Annual Survey of Manufactures, 1959, and 1958 Census of Manufactures, Preliminary General Statistics, Bureau of the Census. * These industries were listed as predominantly oriented to missile production in the 1958 Census of Manufactures. The figures for "Radios & Related Products" are from that Census.

Value added is the market price of goods completed by a given establishment less the cost of materials purchased from others. It includes labor costs, profits and depreciation set-asides, and taxes paid.

What can we surmise from these data as regards the secondary economic effects of defense spending, concentrated as it is in only a few industries? In former periods, when conventional warfare and preparations for it prevailed, sufficiently heavy increases in military procurement would result in additions to *both* labor and capital. But rising procurement of missiles—and it is here that the major boosts have been all along—yields relatively much larger additions to labor than to fixed capital in the affected industries.

The technical reasons for this are not hard to find. Missiles are highly intricate, intensively instrumented affairs, requiring massive outlays for research, development, testing and evaluation. Production runs are short; as we have seen, a total of "only" 656 Polarist missiles, for example, is expected to be operational after 1964. Their construction requires predominantly professional personnel: Of the 565,000 employees engaged in missile manufacture, roughly three-fifths are engineers and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other professionals and semiprofessionals*. This is far above the average for manufacturing generally. According to an estimate of the Aerospace Industries Association, the R & D portion of the total cost of military weapons production has risen from 20% for an intercontinental bomber to 60% for an intercontinental ballistic missile.

The effect of the income multiplier arising in the aircraft and electronics industries, then, seems predominantly associated with payments to labor directly engaged in them; and much less with payments to labor in industries supplying aircraft and electronics with plant and capital equipment. This contrasts with the older line durables industries, where the income multiplier can be associated with direct labor payments *as well as* high capital outlays (indirect labor payments), thus greatly intensifying the multiplier effects.

Closely associated with the characteristic of labor intensity in the major defense industries is the peculiar occupational structure to which today's military technology gives rise.

It is difficult to estimate how many scientists and engineers are directly engaged in the defense effort. According to the National Science Foundation, there were close to 1.1 million natural scientists and engineers in the U.S. in 1960. Twenty per cent of these were employed in the industries most closely linked to defense. But, judging by the extent of Federal subsidization of industrial research and development (R&D), the actual proportion of such personnel paid from (or with the help of) defense funds must be far larger.**

Federal funds for R&D in fiscal 1960 amounted to $7.742 billion, 87% of which (or $6.7 billion) was allotted to defense. Nearly this entire sum was paid to industry under Government contract, thus financing around three-fifths of industry's total R&D bill.

The flow of Federal funds for R&D is, to be sure, no less concentrated than that of military procurement. The Government paid 87% of the aircraft industry's R&D performance, 68% of electrical equipment's, and 51% of scientific instrument's. But Federal funds also constitute a strategic portion of R&D in other leading industries, financing 38% of non-electrical machinery's, a third of rubber's, and 28% of chemical's.

It is not easy to see where all the highly specialized talent associated directly with defense research would fit in case of a serious reduction in armaments expenditures. No doubt, this consideration has played a role in the decision to expand the space program more rapidly, although the latter will generate further large accretions to the existing body of aerospace-related professionals. It is all very well to cite peaceful alternatives to military spending such as those impressively listed on pages 87 and 88 of Seymour Melman's book *The Peace Race*. But, ob-

* Author's estimate based on Table 10 of *Industry Manpower Surveys No. 102*, Missiles & Aircraft, U.S. Department of Labor, January 1962.

** *Reviews of Data on Research & Development*, No. 30, Sept. 1960, and *The Long-Range Demand for Scientific and Technical Personnel*, National Science Foundation, 1961.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

viously, the skills and brains that have gone into most of the $250-million ICBM base at Omaha are very different from those that built the great dam at Dalles, Oregon.

Granted, an electronics engineer can be retrained to become a civil engineer; a nuclear physicist can switch to medical research. But before retraining can begin, the stake groups and individuals have in their investment in skills, and the link they have to the industries that support them must be thoroughly destroyed. This happened in mining and farming where skills have, however, been simple. But today's armaments industry represents an investment in exotic skills and equipment that does not lend itself to the kind of quick conversion to peacetime output experienced in the older line durables at the end of World War II. In sum, the occupational structure of the armaments industry looms as one of the more substantial obstacles to the progress of disarmament.

(3) In contrast to aircraft and electronics, the older line durables industries with their vast capital investment account for a relatively small share of defense procurement. We do not wish to minimize it: The 10% shown in Table I for the iron and steel industry, for example, equalled some six million tons of finished steel shipments in 1958. Moreover, in view of the finer steels needed in defense today, it probably yielded a disproportionately high share of steelmakers' profits and required above-average man-hours of work.

Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying the fact that, where formerly a large military establishment benefited the older line basic and soft goods industries directly—coal, iron and steel, machinery and ordance, chemicals, textiles, and food—this is not the case today to anything like the same extent.

Procurement of ordnance and vehicles, for example, valued at $4.7 billion in fiscal year 1953, fell to a post-Korean low of $400 million in 1959. It has been raised again by the Kennedy Administration and is slated to run to $1.7 billion in fiscal 1963. The renewed emphasis on a "limited war" potential may help—and it is probably not unrelated to —employment and capacity utilization in the capital goods industries. Nevertheless, it cannot reverse the evolution of military technology which has spurred the growth of the aerospace corporations. Missiles procurement, at only $245 million in fiscal 1953, has climbed steadily, and is budgeted at $3.9 billion for fiscal 1963.*

This shift from the older to the newer types of military hardware has resulted in the creation and growth of firms almost entirely dependent on defense work, i.e., without significant civilian markets. Also, these firms possess very little flexibility in converting to or diversifying into such markets.

With few exceptions, the value of defense procurement contracts represents a far higher proportion of the sales of aircraft and electronics

* *Order of Magnitude Data on Comparative Expenditures by Functional Title,* Department of Defense, January 18, 1962.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

firms than of firms in the older line durables and non-durables. For example, 65% of total net sales of General Dynamics (which was awarded $1.3 billion worth of defense contracts in 1960) went to the military; 84% of sales of Lockheed Aircraft; 56% of Boeing's; 69% of the Martin Co. By contrast, only 2% and 7%, respectively, of sales of General Motors and Chrysler went to the military in 1960.*

Further illustrating the profound shift in armaments technology over the past decade are the changes in rankings listed in Table III. The ranking of General Motors, for example, number one in 1950–56, had dropped to 21 in 1960. Ford, in twelfth place in 1950–56, ranked 70 in 1960.

Table III . . . Rankings of Selected Key Companies Receiving Military Prime Contract Awards, 1960 and 1950–56

	Rankings	
Contractor	*1960*	*1950–56 avg.*
General Dynamics	1	12
IBM	16	30
General Motors	21	1
Chrysler	22	13
Burroughs Corp.	28	43
Minneapolis Honeywell	37	62
Mass. Inst. of Technology	41	82
DuPont	52	38
Olin Mathieson Chemical	53	33
Bethlehem Steel	61	41
Ford Motor Co.	70	12
Intntl. Harvester	82	27
U. S. Rubber	n.l.	56
U. S. Steel	n.l.	51

Source: Department of Defense releases. n.l.—not listed. 1960 is calendar year, 1950–56 avg. refers to fiscal-year periods.

Nevertheless, military sales undoubtedly play a key role in the product and marketing plans of certain strategically placed companies. Firms like IBM (with military contracts in 1960 representing 22% of total sales), General Electric (23%), RCA (25%), Sperry-Rand (27%), Burroughs Corp. (32%), and American Tel. & Tel. (6%) gain major advantages for their civilian markets from research paid by, and know-how obtained from, their defense work. This fact makes them active members of the military-industrial complex.

There are numerous interlocking financial and organizational relationships between firms oriented mainly toward civilian markets and firms dealing mainly in defense. "Diversification" works both ways, as Ford's recent acquisition of Philco (the latter having a large stake in

* Data on military contracts awarded to prime contractors from Department of Defense releases. Per cent of net sales based on data from The Value Line Investment Survey.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

defense contracts, the former only an insignificant one) exemplifies. The basic attitude of American corporations that governs their production and financial policies is summed up well in the following statement of a major defense supplier before a congressional committee:

"Reviewing the history of two almost disastrous wars and appraising the technological and ideological realities of this century, it is my conviction that defense must be a permanent way of life. And that in order to keep in being those aggregates of vital skills that underlie our capability . . . to be strong . . . the modern industrial corporation must . . . have a broader base. It must be strong in defense production, strong in civilian production." Quoted by Murray L. Weidenbaum in *Planning and Forecasting in the Defense Industries,* Belmont, Calif., 1961, page 159.

It is evident from what has been said that the shrinkage in the useful life of weapons, owing to rapidly evolving technology, does not have the same effect as the consumption of matériel during past periods of war and preparation for war. Then, more of the same was produced in increasing quantity; now. there are frequent shifts in the product wanted.

In sum, the technical requirements of today's weapons production necessitate a high degree of specialization; firms engaging in it must be virtually underwritten by the Government and, in fact, frequently are creatures pure and simple of the defense effort. This insulates them from non-defense mass markets, but also deprives them of the flexibility any energetic management covets.

It may be noted that profits per dollar of sales or as a per cent of net worth of some major defense contractors do not compare very favorably with those of predominantly non-defense producers.* Reported profits often obscure the true financial strength of companies, which should also be gauged by depreciation set-asides, size of executive salaries, stock options granted, and the like. Still, they must be regarded as a prime indicator. For all manufacturing, profits per dollar of sales (or margins) amounted to 4.1% in the first three quarters of 1961; depreciation, to 3.3%. By contrast, margins in aircraft and parts for the same period were 1.7% and depreciation also 1.7%.**

However, the factor of relatively low profits should not be made too much of. As has been indicated, for many corporations defense work is a means of subsidizing research overhead and of offsetting fluctuations in civilian sales. Low profits in defense assure high profits in nondefense markets. (For an interesting discussion of this and related points, see also *State Capitalism in the United States,* by Paul Crosser; New York, 1960.)

(4) Having dealt with some of the specific effects of defense spending, we now turn briefly to the implications of its role as the major channel of Federal expenditures.

---

* *Business Record,* National Industrial Conference Board, December 1961, page 27 ff.
** *Quarterly Financial Report for Manufacturing Corporations,* FTC–SEC, Third Quarter 1961.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As is well known, the share of defense in the total output of goods and services in the U. S. has been between 9% and 10%. This is commonly taken as the measure of the economy's *dependence* on such spending. It would be better to say that it is a measure of what is *taken out* of the economy; it represents a cost, not a contribution. It is, in the economic sense, in the class of luxury goods, a form of highly organized waste which adds nothing either to the nation's reproductive powers nor to its potential for growth. It is part of the national product only statistically.

Nevertheless, whatever the political reasons and rationalizations for the maintenance of a great military establishment, it is a means of keeping the economic system going. The Federal Government, by virtue of its fiscal powers, taxes away substantial sums, thus drawing upon the economy's potential savings which, because of the risk of lower profit yields, the private sector has become increasingly unwilling to absorb for investment purposes.

It is not fortuitous that "national unity" can be achieved where spending for the defense of the flag is involved but not for a system of much-needed medical insurance, for student scholarships or, generally, for raising consumer purchasing power. Defense spending supports a large sector of the economy without disturbing the political status quo. One could argue, of course, that there is nothing inherent in capitalism which prevents the adoption of some of the programs mentioned above. This is true; but it ignores the social bases on which capitalism, in the U. S. at least, still rests. No doubt, the sophisticated managers of big corporations know very well that a system of public health insurance would be cheap and efficient and would, by raising real incomes, serve indirectly to broaden the markets for the goods they produce. But they cannot support it, at least not openly, since a common ideology links them with the small group of physicians and private insurance firms whose interests would be affected adversely, and since their own privileges are dependent in some measure on the maintenance of the conservative consensus. Objective pressures will eventually compel some form of health insurance as they already are working their way in urban renewal. But the results will necessarily be (and are) compromised by the resistance of entrenched class and sectional interests, which are rarely legislated out of existence.

The growth of the military establishment, then, and the related fact that defense spending has become the key stabilizer in the U. S. economy, is a consequence not merely of basic policy decisions but of conservative drift—drift in the sense of a quite mechanical resultant of (sometimes opposing) social forces.

The Federal Executive, when based on broad, autonomous social movements, can resist and perhaps redirect that drift. But the Kennedy Administration, even if this were its objective, lacks the independent political foundations to do so. Coming to office at a time when there loom major problems of economic and social adjustment no longer susceptible to mere administrative solutions, it seeks a specious national unity based

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mainly on intensifying the cold war and the military effort related to it —an undertaking both perilous and probably barren of results, internal or external.

Let us summarize: High and rising military expenditures are in large measure the result of internal political pressures, rather than of external conditions. Yet the economic benefits, if any, of military procurement outlays are confined to a much narrower band of occupations and industries than was the case when conventional warfare prevailed. Their income multiplier is probably low, partly because the relatively well-paid personnel in the defense industries may have a lower propensity to consume than workers engaged in mass production, partly because capital investments needed in these industries are relatively small.

While defense spending draws on private funds which, without it, would probably be redundant and thus depress profit rates, it cannot be said that it has the positive effect of providing profitable investment outlets on any large scale. The economic function of defense spending is, in this respect, unlike that of, say, imperialism which, for a brief historical span, provided such outlets. Nor does it serve this purpose indirectly, i.e., either by making territorial expansion possible or by otherwise enhancing America's power to impose its own ecenomic system. Here lies a major reason why it is at least an open question whether the financial and industrial oligarchy which dominates the American economy will accept rising levels of defense outlays permanently, unless they can be justified on principles of military rationality, which they can not.

III

It is an open question whether the interests of America's financial and industrial oligarchy are identified in any static, permanent manner with the maintenance of a great military-industrial complex.

The very technology which nurtures that complex also undermines its usefulness as an instrument of national power. On the other hand, however, it represents a center of power outside the older ruling cadres of industry and finance. It has come to serve distinct functions of internal political and economic stability, promoting not only its own purposes but also propping those older ruling strata of American society.

It is possible to explore only some key aspects of this contradiction.

There is a nagging fear among thoughtful persons of a trend towards a kind of American fascism. We need only point to some of the articles appearing in the *Newsletter* of the Committee of Correspondence, to Paul Goodman's piece in the Winter 1962 DISSENT, or to the work of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. There is no denying that such tendencies exist and that, in case of major "reverses"—a Castroite Brazil or Venezuela—the *possibility* of a "police state" in the U. S. mentioned by Goodman will arise.

The question is, what would an American fascism be the response to? What would it solve? In Germany and Italy, fascism was a means to overcoming severe internal crises. It is difficult to foresee internal crises

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of similar depth in the U. S. It is equally difficult to foresee—not that the U. S. may embark on a hesitant military adventure which could not possibly decide anything—but how, if it were a quasi-fascist power, it could hold anything but the most rotten boroughs abroad, and how it could retain the worldwide authority which remains so important a prop of its power.

In any case, the idea of a quasi-fascist America assumes a world such as Robert Heilbroner in his *Future as History* seems to postulate: One of hostile "proletarian" nations to which an oversatiated U. S. reacts by isolation and authoritarianism. The assumption is questionable. It is more likely that we are entering a plural world of nations and that men of the type of Nehru, Tito, Nasser, Nkrumah, Castro, Quadros and Bourguiba will govern it for some decades ahead. These men and the forces they represent will not be linked in a monolithic "proletarian" international but will harken to their national needs, and these cannot be met without help from the U. S. and countries like it.

For U. S. society or, better, for the American state to reconstitute itself into a military-fascist entity would seem irrelevant to these worldwide trends—they do not call for such a response; and irrelevant to the expansionist requirements of the dominant forces composing it—they would suffer attrition.

There is, furthermore, the immense fact of the developing European Common Market, whose rising challenge it is impossible to meet by retreating into a fascist-isolationist "Fortress America." Nor, needless to add, can the growing potential of Russia be dealt with that way.

World conditions as well as employment needs are compelling the U. S. to spur its economic growth. This cannot be done without increasing intervention by the Federal Government in economic life. Beyond question, as Heilbroner remarks, ". . . planning, as a social instrument, would tend to have a conservative rather than a radical aim" in the U. S.,* although planning, like other basic policies which rulers are at times forced to adopt, can give rise to changes ultimately weakening the social foundations of their originators.

However we would want to label it, such planning could not be of the type on which Hitler and German Big Business reached implicit agreement: A military buildup combined with national autarchy with a view to eventual economic dominance of Eastern Europe. Rather, it would have to be, and likely will be, the kind that will attune the U. S. economy more closely with evolving world conditions.

These conditions will be increasingly shaped by the rise of the developing countries. It is likely that a number of new, strong states will evolve, be their forms of government "pluralistic" or authoritarian. Countries like Brazil and India may become great powers. Countries like Egypt, Yugoslavia, Ghana already possess influence by far exceeding their power.

The evolution of new nations has been a fact of world politics since

* *The Future as History*, New York, 1960, p. 145.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

World War II. It is likely to characterize a lengthy historical period, lasting decades. It is a development to which the quotation cited at the head of this article addresses itself: Military means can affect it, but only marginally; they cannot decide its course.

Conceivably, military means deter an attack on the U. S. But the real problem is how to preserve the international pre-eminence of the U. S. and that of its industrial and financial oligarchy, in a world where the social system on which it bases itself is becoming increasingly isolated; and where industrial power has simply ceased to be the monopoly of the West.

We cannot do justice to these problems within the framework of this article. The essential impotence of military power they suggest does not, of course, entail disarmament as a logical sequel; it merely facilitates it. It is probable that a high level of armaments will coexist with the process of adjustment to evolving world conditions which will be imposed upon this society. Armaments will be "superseded" the way national boundaries have become antiquated. (In Western Europe, the obsolescence of national boundaries has become an acknowledged fact. It was not preceded by radical changes in social structure. For totalitarian countries, boundaries serve to keep their people in rather than to keep enemies out.)

The dependence of the American economy on arms manufacture is unquestionably a major bar to disarmament. In addition, it interposes major difficulties to the adjustment of the American economy to world conditions. This is not because the U. S. cannot "afford" a combination of large armaments expenditures, a generous foreign aid program, and a high standard of living for all. It can. It is because the American fiscal structure cannot accommodate such a combination. That structure now rivals the price system in being a means of maintaining the status of the capitalist elites in this country. Its foremost function has become the financing of Keynesian "holes in the ground" in the shape of a vast defense and space exploration effort. Among its most important effects is to leave a large portion of the social surplus in private hands, thus further stabilizing and extending the hold of these elites on society (advertising, the stock market, corporate support of educational and research institutions, etc.).

The fiscal system could evolve further in the direction of propping American capitalism, if the latter existed in a kind of "isolated state." But, of course, it does not. It exists in a world in which the private appropriation of wealth has become a costly anachronism. No nation can afford it any longer, not because it results in intolerable inequities (which it does,) but because it saps the strength of society and, particularly, of the state.

The objective needs of the American state to maintain its status as a leading power, and the interests of the American capitalist elite and its following are not identical. The tension between those needs and these interests will grow. The policies of the Kennedy administration,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inadequate as they are in formulation, faltering as they are in execution, reflect some of these tensions.

This economy and the social system it supports cannot survive unless it faces outward and unless it gives worldwide scope to the expansionary forces inherent in it. Statism in economic affairs where they touch—as they do increasingly—upon the international interests of American capitalism is incipient already in numerous financial, foreign-trade and foreign-aid arrangements. These also affect more and more the still "free" foreign investment decisions of private corporations. The continued growth of statism is inevitable, but it cannot be an efficacious vehicle for protecting and enhancing the U. S. stake in world markets and investments if it is based on a stagnant national economy. And a key condition of overcoming this stagnation is the reallocation of the social surplus —which necessarily includes declining outlays for armaments. This, however, requires (1) internal political changes as fundamental as occurred in the Jacksonian era or the Civil War period; and (2) an external settlement analogous in significance to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

•

The military and its supporting industries, based as they are on the strategy of nuclear deterrence, have virtually lost their defense function which alone could rationalize their parasitic existence. "(They) are caught," says Kenneth Boulding, "in an implacable dynamic of technological change which makes them increasingly less capable of defending the countries which support them, except at an increasingly intolerable cost." *(Daedalus,* Fall 1960.)

We have deliberately abstained from discussing alternatives to armaments spending in concrete detail. Technically, there are no insoluble difficulties in shifting resources from one form of economic activity to another. The human problems would be great but not different qualitatively from those which have been—and still are—encountered in declining, technologically obsolescent sectors. Some form of planning would be required, however, to ease the shift.

Planning is, of course, a political function in principle. The bars to planning the U. S. economy are as formidable as those in the way of disarmament; they are similar in nature. A significant measure of planning would have to be preceded (or accompanied) by deep changes in the relationship of political forces in this country. It is hard to see such changes on the horizon. Yet, economic growth has always been an indispensible condition of the existence of the industrial and financial oligarchy in the U. S. Arms spending has, at best, propped the economy, but has hardly stimulated growth. Hence, some form of planning seems likely to develop, even against the resistance of that oligarchy, which would have to yield a share of its power to other forces in American society.

Disarmament is not so much the alternative to nuclear war as to stagnation and retrogression. The price which must be paid—in terms of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the danger of accident and of the deleterious effects upon the fabric of the American body politic—for a military establishment based on nuclear weapons unlikely to be used will not, we submit, be granted over the longer run.

THE PILL IS SUGAR-COATED

The following material is taken from *Dagbladet,* a Norwegian daily newspaper, for February 27, 1962. The article quotes *Frit Danmark,* February 11, 1962, as source for the information.

"In Denmark the Civil Defense authorities have sent out a brochure on how to protect oneself 'in the event of' an atomic war. The following two sections in the original draft were subsequently deleted.

"I. *Show consideration for society—think of the survivors.*

"If you have not reached shelter in time, or if your evacuation-convoy has got stuck on a blocked road, or if you, as a consequence of your work as a farmer, timber-cutter, soldier, fisherman or seaman, have been exposed to radiation, you should calmly get away from the public road, select some place a good distance from inhabited areas (for instance, shelters or hospitals), put your identification papers at an easily accessible spot (for instance, a breast pocket, or, for women, neck opening) and, before you become ill, dizzy or bewildered by anxiety or pain—in the interest of society as well as for your own sake—take the suicide pill distributed by the government. This pill is sugar-coated and can be taken without water. (You will feel absolutely no unpleasantness.)

"II. *The shelter's equipment.*

"Club, crowbar and/or truncheon to prevent overfilling of shelter, possibly also, to the extent that the police and the civilian defense authorities jointly recommend it, small arms to defend oneself against panic, as well as to turn away persons suffering from radiation sickness who, it must be generally assumed, would want to force their way into the shelters for help and protection and who would thereby expose the shelters to infection. In addition, calcium chloride solution and/or disinfectants and deodorants in suitable spray containers to neutralize contagion and odor from corpses which will have accumulated at the entrances to many of the shelters in the course of three to eight days."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

Paul Goodman

FORMAT AND ANXIETY

The following little reportage was commissioned by Show *magazine. The editor, Robert Wool, read it in my presence, occasionally smiling, and he said, "Yes, of course, that's just how it is." He suggested a few small changes, which were improvements; sent the transcript down to be processed for publication; and in due course sent me a check. In a few weeks, however, he phoned me and told me apologetically that Huntington Hartford, the publisher of the magazine, had absolutely vetoed the essay, and he returned it to me.*

This pattern has begun to happen to me frequently, that work of mine is commissioned, accepted (and paid for) by the working *editors, but is vetoed by the "decision makers." I need not point out to the readers of* Dissent *that it is by such means that our society presents us with its dull and dangerous monolith. I have also had to withdraw articles in a rage because the editors of magazines with large circulation have asked me to delete or tone down accurate pointed references. I have no doubt that many essays appear, signed by fine writers, that have been emasculated in this way. May I urge my fellow-writers to publicize all such incidents, so that the critical intellect can do its job? If we do not band together on this, we are ruined. The* Nation *would be an appropriate vehicle for this kind of news.*

I don't much look at the movies, television, or the other popular arts covered by *Show* magazine. About once a year my wife and I go to a movie to see what that is like. Occasionally, if I am immured alone with a TV set, I switch it on.

Last fall I was at a hotel in Galesburg, Illinois, where I was to give a speech at Knox College, and I switched on the TV before going to bed. It was Jack Paar, of whom I had heard; and his guest was Max Lerner, the historian and journalist. What I saw

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

astonished and enraged me. Max is, in my opinion, wrong-headed and boring, but he is (sentimentally) earnest; yet he was treated by Paar and *the format of the show* with a disregard bordering on contempt. At one point Max, obviously disturbed, was discussing the necessity of forgiving Germany because of the needs of the Cold War, when suddenly Paar cut him off to hold up a silk stocking and make a pitch. Interrupted, Max made a pitiable face and my heart went out to him. This recalled to me many previous moments of disgust and indignation when we would be listening to terrible radio reports about the invasion of Hungary or a crisis in the United Nations, and they would be interrupted by a jingling commercial beneath the dignity of a grown man to write or speak. How in such a case can the Americans make sense of the news, follow a train of thought, or indeed retain any notion of the reality of the world? . . . Jack Paar switched to a gentleman who did card tricks, and I switched off the set.

Next morning, putting aside my notes, I described to the community at Knox the Jack Paar show of the night before, which some of them had watched. To my surprise this had an extraordinary effect. Many were as if stunned. And in subsequent conversations I came to realize, what would never have occurred to me, that most people do not notice the actuality, what is really present, on their TV screens. They simply go along with the formats that stop thought and prevent feeling. They take the baseness and absurdity of the human figures for granted, and cease to notice them. This explains the puzzling double standard that obtains, how ordinary intelligent people are not overcome by rage and nausea. The audience is not *there* in any present or esthetic way. They are perhaps carrying on an unconscious revery; or they are being sketchily reminded of the various symbols of American society and reliving their own psychosexual pathology (this is Parker Tyler's theory of the movies). The more sophisticated, accepting the format and the devaluation of persons implied in it, discuss whether it is well or poorly done for what it is. This is the usual hip criticism of "popular culture." Obviously, such responses are disastrous to any use of this serviceable medium as communication, or to this audience ever having a thoughtful or artistic experience. (In an art-work there is no format and less and less is taken for granted.) If this is indeed the general situation with the audience, I am afraid that the whole enterprise had better be discontinued: it is our duty to boycott and destroy it.

I have had occasion to experience how the format stops thought and feeling also for the persons in the program. I am often on the radio and sometimes on the TV, for these have a wide audience that I like to reach. But it is hard to retain one's identity. At best there is an unpleasant battle in the studio. An interviewer asks me a question about which he or she cares nothing, and I have to say, "Why do you ask that when you couldn't care less?" Or perhaps I am answering a question and the master of ceremonies, e.g., Eric Goldman on a program ludicrously called "The Open Mind," suddenly becomes fearful because I am criticizing the network or even introducing a sexual subject; he tries to cut me off. Then there is nothing for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it but to take him by the arm and say, "Look, I'm not being paid for this. I'm here because your station has preempted the audience and I have something to say. I *will* say it." This is unpleasant. But the worst is when I am completely snowed and emasculated by the format—it is too quick and glib for me—and then I determine not to go back there. (When there has been a battle, they won't have me back there!)

It is also dangerous to make a recording, for they will likely cut out your meaningful sentences. They pledge not to, but I have known them to lie. The last time I was approached by a man from CBS, I said I would require a forfeit. This of course was unheard of and impossible. Does anyone have a suggestion how we can use their media and yet protect ourselves from being edited and abused?

Let me mention a sobering incident of another kind. Last winter some of us engaged in a series of peace demonstrations in New York. At one, I was picketing my publisher with a sign, "Take Time Off to Stop the Cold War," and a friend, Jules Rabin, who had walked from San Francisco to Moscow, came by to march up and down with me in the snow. Then Ben Grauer of NBC-TV came to cover the picketing and he started, predictably, by asking me, "Why don't you picket the Kremlin?" "That's odd you ask me that," I said, "since my friend Jules here just did. Why don't you ask him that question?" With a sour face, Grauer had the camera turned on him, asked a brusque question, and received an interesting reply. *Yet this dramatic incident was edited out for the broadcast.* I cannot but think that this was dishonest reporting. It must occur often. It is a peculiarly deadly kind of censorship, since people take photographs as signs of reality. Editing like this keeps reinforcing a stereotype and finally, alas, makes it be all the reality there is.

II

When Robert Wool, the editor of *Show,* asked me to write something for him, I at first refused, for I had nothing to say.* Then I recalled my experience at Knox, and I suggested that it might be interesting and useful to report on a couple of hours of the TV as I actually experienced them with an innocent eye, at least a TV-innocent eye. The editor agreed to this with mild enthusiasm. In order to get the right tone, I decided to watch the common or household variety, rather than the big evening programs or the dramas. (Upon the advice of John Oatfield of Radio-TV Reports I chose March 28th from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.; and I went to my brother's where there is a television machine.)

Again to my surprise, my response

* The kind of criticism of popular culture that even a good journalist like Dwight Macdonald does, seems to me to be futile. To expose our society, one does not need to look at movies, etc.; it is more direct to look out the window or the front page of the *Times.* And if the aim is to make the mass-audience more critical of what it swallows, the worst possible method is for a respected man to take the products seriously—or ironically—and then cavil about them. Perhaps, however. Macdonald *does* take them seriously, in which case there is nothing further to say; it is his privilege. I was once a movie-reviewer myself, on *Partisan Review,* twenty years ago. My first month, there was, blessedly, Chaplin's *Great Dictator,* worth writing about. The next month I looked in vain, and finally covered a festival of D. W. Griffith at the Museum of Modern Art and reviewed a book on it by Iris Barry. But the third month I was altogether at a loss; I wrote a theoretical article on the esthetics of the Shape of the Screen; and gave up.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was nothing like disgust or anger; it was rather a mixture of sadness and compassion for the anxiety, the tension, and the fright manifested on the screen, in most of the persons, in almost all of the format and timing, and in the texture of the commercials. (I shall mention exceptions.) In one case, as I shall explain, I was myself swept into the anxiety and it took, I guess a year off my life. Let me describe four programs.

The first was not, on the whole, anxious-making. It was a Giving Away of Commodities to the one on a panel of contestants who guessed closest to their list price. This was stupid but not unpleasant. The contestants were eager for the commodities, or at least interested in them, as well as in doing well, so the contest was not merely a painful competition. The lady who won, and had won the day before, had a shrewd eye and a greedy joy that were quite appropriate to the game and marked her as a champion in this kind. A gentleman—he was in insurance—seemed to hedge his guesses according to the probabilities of the game rather than interest in the commodities; he did less well. A third, a Jewish lady from Brooklyn, did poorly because the commodities were not really for her: they were spring-time suburban items, patio furniture, a golf-cart, a line of Robert Hall dresses; if they had been Ohrbach's, she would have priced them on the nose. The master of ceremonies of all this acted the zany, putting on a funny hat, etc., and this was what it was. Indeed, the only elements out of context were the commercials, and they were bad. The zany suddenly assumed a solemn tone and said, "*Remember* that in Krispy crackers the flavor and crispness are twice protected," and he gave a box a little proprietary tap. A Heinz commercial was frantic in its cutting and gave one indigestion, too quickly showing stalks of rice in a field—in a hand—a baby—a glass container—a box; one could not take a breath. This ad and another used the buddy-buddy "You see" that I find insulting: "You see the folks at Heinz have been blending. . . . You see Milk of Magnesia does more for you." During the course of this show also, we were assured, by an actor dressed in a white jacket, that "90 per cent of doctors themselves take aspirin."

The next program, however, made me sad, compassionate, and ill. It was a sample of nursery-school, with a teacher and half a dozen four-year-olds. The essential idea was entirely false, for although most of the action was "for the children," everything was directed toward getting mama to buy at a certain "friendly" department store. E.g. "So tell your mother to get this game at ——, the phone number is XY-z 8222"—this to tiny children! But the agony of the show was the suffering of the teacher. She seemed competent to handle the children, but not in this format, in front of a camera, where every second had to be chock-full. She did not stop rattling away. Every sentence was too fast. She was in a tightly controlled panic lest anything spontaneous occur, and she kept saying, "Now let's not go too far because we want to open the big door that goes into Wonderland"—"Let's not reach for our cookies *yet*." Yet under these frantic circumstances, she still had to get them to perform and not freeze, and so she was continually tensely urging, "C'mon everybody, now we're going to have physical fitness fun. . . . C'mon all the Jacks fall

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

down. . . . C'mon everybody, be children, everybody in Romper Room." (*Romper Room* was the name of this torture, though the little boys wore the usual long trousers and the girls proper frocks.) "C'mon everybody, let's sing *Chickadee happy and gay*—" and she would sing in a strained voice, but the children would be mum, or mumble, or make inhibited frightened gestures. Generally the children were wooden and brow-beaten; from time to time one would give a spasmodic skip or hop. Then a small lamb and goat were brought on, tugged by the leash to keep their noses in the camera. It was impossible, observing all this constraint and suffering, of animals, small children, and the hard-working woman, not to become quite ill. I was shocked at only one point, when the teacher left the group to demonstrate and speak for an ad, for Green Thumb Plant Set. For some reason, also, the little nursery school kept reverting to nationalism and militarism, starting (age 4) with a flag salute and pledge of allegiance, and repeating, "C'mon now, be soldiers . . . walk like soldiers." I often wanted to switch this one off and spare myself, but soldier-like I stayed with it for this report.

Next was *Your First Impression,* again a game, consisting of guessing a Personality from a few clues. It was deft and not especially stupid, but unlike the Pricing Commodities game it had no relevance to the appetites of the contestants. They were there, apparently, simply to win. (I do not know if they were paid.) This made it a meaningless competition, to be merely skillful, merely to excel. What could the audience identify with in such a case, except an exercise in one-upping? In short, the contest was a gimmick, simply an expense of spirit, it had no animal or social reason for being. It was typically what Boorstin has called a "pseudo-event." Nevertheless, the half-hour had one satisfactory minute, the Ivory commercial. Unlike any other commercial I saw, this had a pleasant drawing and a nice plastic flow into the pictures of a baby and wash on the line, in subdued tone and texture, and with a reasonable pace of cutting. The network announcement, however, with its brass fanfare and zippy montage, had the usual ulcer-producing ugliness.

Finally, I watched a psychologist who answered letters from listeners, which were read rather obsequiously by a man probably on the staff of the station. Ordinarily, as an author in the field, I would expect to pay attention to such questions and answers; but this particular doctor made it difficult, because she allowed herself to project nothing from the screen. She did not give her voice out to the listeners, nor did it come from deep enough in her throat to reveal herself. The studio had made her up to be a tidy image of suburban competence. Her smile, appearing after she had made a point, seemed primarily for herself and secondarily to say to me, "Bear with me; you see? we'll get through it." She behaved, to my judgment, as if a little beyond her depth, although she was of course perfectly adequate to the routine wisdom allowable on such an occasion. It was the public role that was beyond her. (It would be beyond any one.) But the astounding thing about Dr. Brothers was the movement of her body. She was entirely front, and when she moved, to turn to the reader of the letters, it was as a solid block. Some-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

times the effect of this was ferocious. She did not move but moved herself. Her cheeks and brow were generally immobile while she moved her mouth; occasionally, however, at moments whose meaning I could not fathom, her brow would suddenly furrow with intense questioning perplexity that seemed to say, "Am I doing all right?" Her shoulders were held firm, so her hand gestures, again, did not flow or spring from her but were pushed forward. She had one commercial pitch—for Office Temporaries, "Use your spare time profitably"—and this was disastrously deflating of her precarious authority; she should resolutely refuse to say it. Professionals do not plug ads. On the whole, the effect of the performance (on me) was the unease that arises in the presence of irrelevant and misplaced effort; I felt a compassionate desire to cut the song-and-dance and get to the reality, the person herself who was over-controlling all this behavior; to ask her, "What is the matter, dear?"

By and large the tension and anxiety in these presentations seem to start from the commercials and spread over all the rest. I suppose the effect is inevitable in the commercials themselves, for their time is evidently scheduled to the second and greed crams them over-full. But the persons also are caught in the wooden framework and generally express the strain of it. If this painful feeling is not experienced by the spectators (I do not know if it is), it is because they are glued in it themselves. I could not habitually watch these programs without emotional damage.

I doubt that the whole can be remedied. Any attempt to "correct" the conditions I have been describing must result in some other phony format, some other wooden framework. On the other hand, to achieve documentary naturalism, or the feeling and imagination of art, would require allowing the spontaneous, the unscheduled, the empty, or the honest.

Herman Benson

THE SICKNESS OF THE UNIONS

After years of effort and expense, the Fund for the Republic's Trade Union Project is coming to an end. One of the rare products of this concentration of talent, resources, and contemplation is a 75-page booklet by Solomon Barkin, "The Decline of the Labor Movement and What Can Be Done About It."

Mr. Barkin has been Research Director of the Textile Workers Union of America for twenty-five years and is not one to rush angrily into headlong criticism of unions. He maintains the demeanor of an analytical scholar; at the most extreme, he becomes a gently chiding, somewhat disappointed but loyal member of the family. His

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pamphlet is important as the symptomatic expression of the state of mind of a highly regarded union staff intellectual; and that is how it should be read. It has not been welcomed with unanimous acclaim in the labor movement; some unions have praised it; others demur; most ignore it. It is not an "official" work but it echoes the sentiments of many alert labor leaders and staff intellectuals.

The author concludes by prescribing solutions for a multitude of big problems. And yet, as it is sketched here, "the decline of the labor movement" will surely seem overwhelmingly and unmanageable to the reader. It appears compounded of so many simultaneous, interlocking, and deeply implanted social, economic, and historical factors that no single generation of mortals could work its way out: union membership has fallen; jobs disappear in unionized mass production; employers resist fiercely any advance of unionism; Taft-Hartley and "Right-to-Work" stand in the way; social discontent is dulled and the spur to unionization blunted; labor's "public image" is "sullied"; some unions are insensitive to the need to organize; members are apathetic; some workers will not heed the union call; women are slow to join; white-collar and professional employees grow in numbers but remain suspicious of unions; some unions are "tardy" in lifting racial bars and Negroes are disillusioned; low-wage workers remain to be organized; organizing staffs are inadequate; there is jurisdictional squabbling where there should be unity and centralization. This is only part of a long list of troubles that Mr. Barkin sees and he recommends a "drastic overhaul of spirit and structure" in eight pages. There is a certain scope to it all; the remedy for the illnesses is to cure them. Yet, in this sweep something vital is missing.

Suppose in analyzing the character of a man we wrote: he has been out of work for months and people say he is an embezzler; he misses church; his taste in ties is atrocious; enemies say he tortures dogs and children; he smokes, avoids great literature, watches TV incessantly, and irritates the neighbors; his political opinions are primitive; his economic philosophy is uninformed; he drives without a license and passes through red lights and is said to have murdered a friend; one arm is shorter than the other. In all this, some qualities might be more significant than others. And people say? But are they right or wrong? just or unjust? That would be the crux of everything. This comes to mind in pondering Barkin's long list.

When the author sets out to discuss labor's crisis we need help in determining which facts are actually central to that crisis and which are chronic, long-term, nagging difficulties. Otherwise, everything is cluttered together with everything else.

The crisis of unionism is not a crisis of diminished numbers and lessened power. It is a crisis of moral standing. *Unionism is in trouble not because it is weaker but because the liberal community has come to distrust its power.* As Barkin puts it, labor's public image is "sullied." That raises *the* question: are liberals justified in that misgiving? Mr. Barkin does not attempt to reply. Yet the answer is quintessential. If the "sullied image" is the product of a misunderstanding, then a campaign of enlightenment and public relations would be adequate. But if there are proper grounds for the liberal's dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trust, a deeper operation is required. The author never faces up to this question, as we can see in two examples:

More than any other fact, exposures of corruption have damaged unionism's public standing. Yet, the AFL-CIO has abandoned its crusade against crooked officials and the Ethical Practices Committee is moribund. That is not the worst of it; the decent, socially enlightened wing of labor seems unable even to raise the issue for renewed action. In a fleeting phrase, Mr. Barkin refers to the "misbehavior of individual union leaders." A passing word mentions "scandals that have engulfed some leaders of organized labor." A short paragraph ends "Unions have at times undertaken to uproot proven cases of misconduct and to halt abuses that have been publicly documented." (It is characteristic of Mr. Barkin's scrupulous treatment of sensitive subjects that he writes carefully only of "some" leaders when misdeeds take place but neglects that qualifying "some" when praise is distributed. In actuality, only "some" proven cases of misconduct were acted upon and that was long ago.) That's about it on corruption, hardly an adequate treatment of a wracking problem.

Internal democracy suffers the same neglect. Simple rights that we take for granted in a democratic political community are customarily suppressed in some of our most powerful unions. This, too, is at the heart of the liberal disenchantment with unions. In the Painters Union in New York City, mass trials of dissidents have just concluded with the expected fines and suspensions. In the Papermakers Union the Administration is busy cutting down a reform movement which represented half the last convention and elected almost half the International Executive Board. The recent convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union staged a sickening Moscow Trial type of demonstration, complete with conspiring Trotskyites, unanimous votes, and public recantations, against FOUR, the little union of staff employees. These are events which "sully." Mr. Barkin merely notes that some liberals "stressed the need for more internal democracy." He, however, does not. He ignores the subject until page 71 where, in one of his briefest prescriptions, he advises, ". . . unions must adhere to democratic principles in making their decisions on all issues affecting employees. This concept has now been written into law and has to be fully implemented. The stewards of the movement must be beyond reproach." He never tells us how far they are, now, beyond reproach; because on one of the key issues of our day, democracy, his talents for research and analysis fail.

To put it bluntly, Mr. Barkin evades these critical issues. That said, we hasten to add that his pamphlet is nevertheless welcome. Any change inside the labor movement must be spurred on from outside. That drastic transformation in spirit which Barkin desires, requires the efforts of decent-

---

CLOSE-OUT NOT FALL-OUT

"In its fifteen months of operation only one person has bought its product, and so the assets of the Living Circle Company, makers of fall-out shelters, were auctioned off yesterday to satisfy creditors. Nine shelters, valued at $27,000 retail, went for a total of $5,250. Buyers planned various uses for them—as a 'dandy darkroom,' as a place to store garden tools, as a mountain cabin."—From the N. Y. *Times*, April 2.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minded labor leaders, liberal intellectuals, and rank-and-file reformers. Mr. Barkin's work is ample evidence that the liberals' criticism of labor has had its effect. By helping to continue the public discussion, he helps the liberal world prod the conscience of organized labor.

Philip Green

THE POLITICS OF OIL

A Challenge to American Liberalism

For over a decade American social scientists have been developing a theory of political pluralism which claims that real political power is parcelled out, more or less equally, among the various groups and classes of American society. At the same time a sort of underground movement, led by Robert S. Lynd and the late C. Wright Mills, has attempted to revive the now old-fashioned critique of power in a capitalist society, while avoiding the more obviously dated cliches of 1930's Marxism. Such critics, however, have always found extremely difficult the problem of empirical verification, and with it the task of persuading the politically uncommitted. By its nature, social power does not operate openly in a society which swears by the myth of popular democracy. Those who assert the primacy of a particular class or group often seem to be open to the charge (made by Robert Dahl with regard to Lynd and Mills, for instance) of going beyond their own evidence to make up hidden bogeymen of power, whose existence can be neither confirmed nor denied scientifically.

By comparison, those engaged in the kind of studies which are associated with pluralist theory—studies of small towns, interest-groups, etc.—are using material which is more amenable to study and experimental manipulation, and which often leads to optimistic findings about the problem of power. I do not think a convincing case has yet been made that these findings are useful when brought to bear on the more complex area of national institutions. On the other hand, judged according to strict standards of evidence the critics have until now been at least equally unconvincing.

In this context, therefore, the publication of Robert Engler's *The Politics of Oil** represents a major breakthrough for the critics of liberal ideology. The oil industry has been the subject of intensive study before, especially by E. V. Rostow and Harvey O'Connor, but Engler has gone beyond both of these previous works. His major—and original—contribution

* Macmillan, 1961.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is his richly empirical *and* impeccably documented presentation of the thesis that the great oil corporations exercise private and centralized power which is unchecked—*out of "balance,"* to use a favorite phrase of pluralists—with respect to American society as a whole. In thus studying corporate power as it is actually exercised in the United States, he has met the pluralists on their own "scientific" ground, and has succeeded in casting serious doubt on the value of pluralist theory as a description of the American political system. The publication of his work is therefore a significant event.

The question raised by Engler's study of the oil industry is "Who governs"?—who *really* governs? Who determines the powers and policies of our political institutions at the state, national, and international levels, whenever the private interests of the oil industry conflict with public interests? Pluralist theorists would tend to say that no one really "governs," in the sense of making final determinations about national—in this case, petroleum—policy; that state governments, the national government, consumers, the oil "majors," the oil "independents," labor, and industrial giants in other sectors of the economy all come together in a sort of uneasy "countervailing" balance; that policy is then the haphazard resultant of the collision of these various forces. Engler's great contribution is to point out not only several factual defects in such a claim, but also some fundamental theoretical considerations about the importance of resource control in a modern industrial society.

Oil as a natural resource is the basic fuel of both modern industry and modern military might, and thus one of the greatest potential prizes of the Cold War. Such a resource cannot be allowed to be developed irrationally or subjected to the free play of market forces. Someone must impose controls; industrial civilization demands them. "The character of oil," in Engler's words, "requires full economic coordination and planning." As he convincingly demonstrates, the major companies have consequently attempted to build what can be described as essentially an integrated and "planned" economy; they have, further, continually warned each other that if they did not take such action the government would step in and do it for them.

The character of the industrial system which Engler describes in exhaustive detail can only briefly be summarized here.* The majors—the twenty-two interrelated (and interlocked) corporate giants of the oil industry—form both a national oligopoly and one segment of an international cartel which organizes the world's single wealthiest industry. They account for 80 to 90 per cent of the American industry which in 1961 had gross assets of over $60 billion. They have under lease almost 25 per cent of the land area of the United States, together with *all* subsoil rights.

To take but a few examples, the majors control transportation channels (90–95 per cent of the pipeline network; close to 50 per cent of tanker traffic); dealer franchises at the retail end; leasing arrangements with regard

* As for the trustworthiness of Engler's data, a review of his book in the National Petroleum News Bulletin, a semi-official industry-wide newsletter, describes it in the following terms: "It's a . . . heavily documented indictment . . . I have to say that [it] appears to be a very substantial document. His facts seem impeccable. . . ."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to exploration (most wildcatters, Engler points out, are secretly backed by the majors); refining and other processing activities (close to 90 per cent); and basic research. They engage in centralized planning activities, not only with each other, but with related and often interlocked firms in other sectors of the private economy. With the help of state conservation laws and Bureau of Mines demand estimates, they regulate supply and maintain or increase price levels and have succeeded in doing so through the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, Suez, and on through the last decade—even in situations, such as the Suez Crisis, when basic national policies were seriously hampered as a result.

As for competition, Engler makes clear that the supposed independence of the "independent" producers, the jobbers, the retailers, the wildcatters, and the rest who make up "little oil," is most often illusory. This sham independence rests on the majors' sense of self-restraint in the face of a potentially hostile body of public law which is itself often held in abeyance. Furthermore, the majors have successfully stifled attempts at competition through product innovation, whether private or governmental, thwarting the development both of synthetics (even during World War II), and of shale oil pools, where they themselves could not control the process.

As wielders of such a vast range of private economic powers, the majors form what Engler accurately describes as "the private government of oil," which has managed to eliminate both "consumer sovereignty" and (in E. H. Carr's suggestive phrase) the "nightmare" of competition; and which controls the pace, techniques and philosophy of development and distribution of this basic resource, with little hindrance even from the national government.*

But the political significance of the nature of this industrial system goes far beyond its mere economic power. In order to maintain its power (and wealth) in an age when centralization of industrial development is almost inevitable, "Big Oil" has striven to insinuate itself into the structure of public government as well, lest (as oilmen themselves continually point out to each other) real authority over such a centralized and planned industrial sector should devolve to its logical repository – the national state itself.

Thus, the range of oil's public activities is more important, and in some ways even more impressive, than its private power; for it is these activities which bring what I have said is Engler's fundamental question—"Who governs?"—into sharp focus. In Engler's phrase, "(It) has harnessed public law, governmental machinery, and opinion to (its) ends. . . ." For its own purposes, the oil industry has coopted the national government in key areas of regulation and performance. (The Bureau of Mines, for example, functions as a price-maintaining mechanism for the industry.) The industry receives, directly and indirectly, an astonishing number of subsidies that go well beyond the depletion allowance both in scope and size. Most of these, moreover—especially accelerated depreciation and amortization programs, as well as the depletion allowance itself—further existing patterns of control within the industry.

* This "government" has gone so far toward formalization that in the case of Esso it includes a private court system for hearing retail dealers' franchise complaints.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Positions in the government relating to petroleum policy have invariably been held by men with close connections in oil, usually in "Big Oil," who see nothing wrong in representing "two masters" at once (the appointment of John McCone as Director of CIA is but the latest example). They are aided, moreover, by a line of advisory committees, under various titles, which due to their presumed sole possession of the necessary expertise, have formed virtually an autonomous policy-making body within the national government—bodies that were and are really accountable to no one but the industry itself, and more specifically the majors.

The result of all this has been at times complete control by private persons of public policy and government activities relating to oil, during the New Deal period, World War II, and the semi-permanent post-War crisis. Engler's lengthy documentation of this point shows that no administration has been an exception, despite the dedicated efforts of public servants like Harold Ickes and Leland Olds. The attempted government development either of special oil deposits or of competing resources has been inhibited where not absolutely stifled; tax, regulatory, and especially proprietary activities of the national government have been distorted away from their basic purposes; there is at least one case described in great detail by Engler where public documents were suppressed.

In addition and, in the era of permanent crisis even more important, the majors have over the years created their own foreign policy (and even foreign ministry). This policy not only competes with that of the national government—as in the opening stages of World War II, when the industry engaged in activities which may at best be called unpatriotic. It also on occasion simply supersedes it, or rather *becomes* it, so that the foreign policy of the United States (in the Middle East most graphically, but elsewhere as well) is to all intents and purposes made by the majors rather than by the State Department. This oil "foreign policy," furthermore, is given greater weight by the fact that the majors are part of a world-wide cartel system. As such, they extend their quasi-sovereign powers of economic regulation and policing, innovation control and resource development, beyond the boundaries of the United States, to a degree which leads Engler to conclude that they are part of "a system of arrangements and understandings that may be called the first world government." Needless to say, concepts of the national interest are at times of only secondary concern to such a "government," while the international outlook thus created is limited to visions no broader than those of profit-making and stubborn resistance to radical social change.

Outside the executive branch of the U. S. government, the pattern of control and deformation of formal political arguments is equally striking. Congress is the repository of whatever anti-major sentiment exists in the national government, but over the years key committees have been given over to men who virtually represent the oil industry; the inertia of congressional organization is thus heavily weighted against basic innovation. In any event, here as in the general area of foreign and national security policy, Congress' role seems to be more and more a negative one. It is confronted with policies that are justified at the level of neces-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sity, as well as being for the most part *faits accomplis;* even if it desired to attack the majors' power, Congress could probably do very little.

Engler leaves little doubt that some state governments are "oil governments" pure and simple, despite the fact that not everyone, even in Texas, necessarily benefits from industry-sponsored policies. School systems and universities are made into industry adjuncts; so-called public bodies such as the Texas Railroad Commission function as industry handmaidens; candidates who would oppose oil-sponsored policies find themselves lacking funds to campaign. Of course, as Engler is obviously aware, money does not talk quite as much in our society as we sometimes fear, and as the industry would perhaps like it to; the public relations activities of the majors particularly have been of uncertain value to them. But in general, wherever there *is* public or official support that can be bought, other private pressure groups, as well as government itself, are unable and often unwilling to compete with oil; and in this connection, Engler discusses several instances which suggest a good deal of outright state government corruption. By sheer wealth alone, then, the industry purchases an important area of generalized social control, of the kind that we tend to think only the national government possesses.

On Engler's evidence, then, it seems that the existence of the free ballot, political parties, representative government, a multitude of competing self-interested semi-public pressure groups, and the other appurtenances of liberal democracy, does not accomplish in practice what it is supposed to in pluralist theory. Those whose interests conflict with the majors are shown to possess little leverage at any level of government.

It must be said at once that Engler's findings do not exhaust the question of how significant is the power of Big Oil, with regard to the functioning of a democratic society. Several impressive arguments may be offered in defense of the existing situation; Engler himself goes out of his way to admit their force. For example: in an abundant economy, of which oil forms an important part, the lack of some real political and economic choice, at least with regard to one's power to affect the shape of income distribution, may not seem very important. By certain standards, it is true, the power of the oil industry may often militate against our concepts of the ultimate well-being of the community. Yet it is also clear that the industry is efficient enough to enrich the material lives of almost all those who come into contact with it or use its products, and this achievement, as Engler emphasizes, cannot be easily dismissed. Similarly, the political situation of American citizens is, after all, far from being one of subjection to "total" social control: there *are* major areas of social life which the industrial giants, whether in oil or elsewhere, simply make no effort to integrate into their "planned economy." May not this be a satisfactory situation over-all, then, considering the benefits we derive from the present system?

The answers to this question must to a large extent vary with the values of the observer. But it is possible to suggest, as does Engler, a highly critical approach based precisely on an acceptance of the same democratic ideals that the leading theorists of American pluralism themselves propose. What we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might say is that the area of economic well-being and formal political freedom that is maintained by a pattern of privately controlled industry comes at a price. It is quite possible, I think, to describe that price as exorbitant, and not worth paying. That price involves, among other things, the unchecked growth of private power, accumulating immense financial resources and lavishing them not only to meet its economic needs but also to set wherever possible the ideological contours of American society. As Engler puts it, the pattern of industrial organization has created virtually a sovereign entity, which has appropriated broad political powers that are exercised without any accountability to the electorate, and which "directly challenge (s) public rule."

It is possible, of course, to argue that the present system does not *inherently* produce such results, and that what is needed is simply "better," more "liberal" government. Engler himself seems *at times* inclined toward this point of view, and shows a nostalgic fondness for New Deal solutions: greater government regulation, more effective "trust-busting," government "pilot projects" or "yardstick" operations in particular areas of resource development. But on other occasions Engler argues more cogently that all such solutions suffer from a fundamental defect. For as he demonstrates at length in the historical sections of his book, the most striking thing about such attempts at "balancing" public and private power has been the relative ease with which the majors have taken over government policies and converted them to their own use; with which the "welfare state" has been turned into a boodle state—the lion's share of the boodle, and the political power attendant on its possession, going to those who already are at the top of the heap. Nor does this pattern seem likely to be broken. Under the impact of the Cold War, as Engler rather sadly points out, American liberalism has apparently lost even the drive it had at the height of the New Deal (when it was still unable to control oil policy), and partakes more and more of the same corporate spirit as do the industrial managers.

In any case, how can a government which is willing to exert itself only haltingly and partially—given the ideology of American welfare capitalism—regulate such a concentration of private economic power as the oil industry? More important, how can government, in a society which continues to exalt private action and private motives, effectuate controls which can really work only if the mythology of the "private" individual is downgraded? The problem is one of *social structure as a whole*—a point to which Engler continually returns. In our kind of society, many manifestations of "state" activity in reality are only the actions of a collection of private persons with at best mixed public and private interests, at worst solely private interests.

To take just one example, with regard to which Engler's analysis is quite enlightening, how is the government going to find enough people qualified to participate in oil industry regulation, who do not have private interests in that industry? The "liberal" way of doing things simply does not encourage the development of experts trained solely as public servants. Thus, the same ideology which insists that government be "balanced" and "limited" by private corporate forces, will,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

if history is any guide, thwart the attempts of government to control those forces. For as Engler shows, private industry tends toward the formation of its own "government," and one that has no such ideological compunctions, and no lack of expertise under its own command. "Regulation" will turn into "partnership," "partnership," gradually, will turn into a state of affairs approaching private control of government: the regulated will become, as they have in the past, the regulators.

A liberal critic might reply, of course, that the oil industry may merely be a flamboyant exception to a general pattern of successful democratic public control of large-scale industry in the United States. A. A. Berle, for example, has at times seemed to suggest that such a pattern exists (though more often he seems to argue that it *ought* to exist). If such *is* the case, why adopt radical reforms that might weaken the structure of our generally satisfactory pluralist system, solely because one element, or perhaps a few elements, in that system have accumulated an inordinate amount of power?

Here, clearly, we are in the realm of hypothesis. But I think it fair to suggest, even without considering the largely impressionistic literature that has grown up around Mills' *The Power Elite,* that such a view is strikingly sanguine. For Engler's book very obviously contains implications that take a careful reader well beyond the bounds of the oil industry itself. As he points out repeatedly, it is not a malevolent "conspiracy" which has produced the present situation in the oil industry, and in the government which attempts to control it; it is rather that the public law and the ideology of the American social system give control over vital resources and goods to private "persons," who in turn form an industrial system the maintenance of which in *statu quo* becomes crucial even to those in the national government who might wish to move toward a more "public" form of control.

It may very well be, of course, that further investigations such as Engler's *would* show that his analysis does not apply elsewhere. But at this point, given the strength of his work, I think it is incumbent on those who assert that pluralism is and will remain a reality to offer some evidence for their theory, *evidence as impressive as Engler's,* and at the level of policy-making and social control with which he deals. For if one accepts the likelihood that an extension of Engler's findings would be valid, it would follow that the maintenance of any system of democratic values demands an entirely different and much more far-ranging attitude toward social change in the United States. Otherwise, the theory of liberal pluralism may simply be the

---

CHILDREN

"Sob suddenly, the bongos are moving.
Or could we find that tall child?
And dividing honestly was like praying badly.
And while the boy is obese, all blasts could climb,
First you become oblong,
To weep is unctuous, to move is poor."
—by A. B. in *Horizon*

"The poet, A. B., is a computer, nicknamed Auto-Beatnik, and the above is one of its early efforts, composed from an 850-word vocabulary and 32 sentence patterns. A. B.'s developers believe that 'a computer can be programmed to write meaningful and relevant sentences in proper English.' "—From the N. Y. *Post.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

means by which American scholars and intellectuals give up the idea of real reform altogether, and stand by approvingly as we plunge willy-nilly into the pseudo-pluralism of a centralized corporate state.

Joseph Bensman and Bernard Rosenberg

THE CULTURE OF THE NEW SUBURBIA

To be contemptuous of the fine arts in suburbia has by now come to seem as "peculiar" as respect for or practice of the fine arts used to be in small-town America. The suburban Babbitt knows that he had better appear to be a cultivated man—by whatever lights and cues his new environment provides him. Artiness, and artsy-craftsiness, if not estheticism and erudition, are *de rigueur*. Middletown was never like this. Nor was Prairieton nor Plainville nor Winesburg nor any of Thorstein Veblen's country towns nor the provincial communities so savagely and lovingly satirized by Sinclair Lewis three or four decades ago.

Neither Lewis nor Sherwood Anderson nor the silent movie makers could have envisaged the present situation. Could they have foreseen a population nearly strapped by the high cost of living whose upper middle classes for the first time do without domestic help chiefly to maintain their heavily mortgaged homes and the mechanical appliances they contain? These people, as young parents and total consumers grievously pinched by inflation and taxation, feel obliged to lay out significant sums of money for their own edification and for the artistic instruction of their young. With payments to be made on the washing machine—and then on the drier, the garbage disposal and the second car—a middle class suburban parent is often willing to pay from seven to ten dollars an hour, four or five times a month, for his son's piano lessons. He may also help to succor his young daughter's dream of becoming an accomplished ballerina at slightly lower, but still spiraling, cost to himself.

For young and old there are concerts, craft, service, and even "egg head" courses, lectures and dance recitals. All ages and both sexes are encouraged—indeed they are gently coerced by the same kind of social pressure that makes most of them church members—to avail themselves of these "rich opportunities." Space is put to unaccustomed use: not only the Merry-Go-Rounders for the kiddies in their own high school auditorium, but the same auditorium for their parents' amateur symphony orchestra in which a man may be a soloist. The community center and the YMCA offer programs in painting, lessons in music and lectures twelve times a year

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for those who wish to be informed on politics and the Sex Question.

This is all the more remarkable because it flies in the face of a well-established American tradition according to which art is unserious, effete, suitable only for women as a pastime and an expression of their subordinate status. Considerable odium was once attached to the man who showed an esthetic bent; and if that bent was pronounced, sooner or later his masculinity was bound to be questioned. We all know how deeply sex roles have been revolutionized and homogenized, how many "feminine" tasks men perform and "masculine" tasks women have usurped. The present preoccupation with art goes beyond that change. It offers culture to everyone, with approval for those who earnestly acquire some and prestige for those who acquire the most. Yet as recently as 1920 high culture was available only to the really rich. When the moderately well-to-do exurbanite and suburbanite seeks social approbation from his neighbors by purchasing an "original" or fondling a first edition, a transformation of some magnitude has taken place.

The extraordinary pervasiveness of culture presents a number of novel phenomena. Above all, the sources of culture production, like the character and background of culture producers, are being radically altered. Until approximately the First World War (and excluding Boston, which was a special source of official culture), urban slums had for some time been a major seedbed of cultural production. "Crazy kids" from the most depressed sections of large cities, marginal types who lived on various sociological and psychological peripheries of the Eastern seaboard, disturbed young men who might alternatively have become gangsters or businessmen, joined with "freaks" from small Southern or Midwestern towns to supply a steady flow of writers, painters, sculptors and musicians. They were for the most part devoid of any direct contact with—let alone immersion in—high culture. These were the principal producers of art who worked from within any tradition they could find.

The central city and the provincial village gave us a whole generation of culture producers, but the suburbs have only given us a new generation of culture consumers. Men like Hart Crane, Ernest Hemingway, William Carlos Williams, Scott Fitzgerald, E. E. Cummings, Jacob Epstein and John Dos Passos were not interested in art as an abstraction or in art as an article of consumption. The suburban point of view is rather different.

At present some writers and artists are residents of suburbia, but even these were either born in the South or in the slums and the hinterlands. To a considerable extent, writers trade on the emotional and intellectual capital of their youth. In this respect Malamud, Algren, Williams and Kazin are entirely typical.

A serious account of the suburbs does not yet exist inside or outside of fiction. Instead there are potboilers. We have the-man-in-the-gray-flannel-suit, crack-in-the-picture-window exposé—which is merely a first attempt to capitalize on the shock value of dealing with a new phenomenon. Its authors came to suburbia late in life. John Hersey's *Marmot Drive* and Granville Hicks' *Small Town* are earnest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

efforts to treat exurbia; however, both these writers matured before the middle class really fled the city. O'Hara, Marquand and Louis Auchincloss locate much of their work in what are now suburbs and exurbs, but they deal with the older upper classes. Their characters are "suburban" only in a pre-war, and therefore obsolete, sense.

•

In the suburbs culture has taken on a meaning quite different from any that would have been intelligible to the so-called lost generation. There it is above all an item to be owned, something the individual possesses as a symbol of his life style. Culture is becoming a norm in the strict sense that its possessor is subject to effective social sanctions. The normative determination of such culture means that philistines can no longer live blameless lives, nor artists unself-conscious ones. It further means that we have got to be cultured whether we like it or not.

This *volte face* does not seem to spring from any inner need to express a vision of life; it seems to spring rather from a socially induced need to exhibit prestigeful symbols. Culture in the suburbs pervades our furnishings and our talk and is at the same time, and by the same token, far removed from the core of our personality. It is a force that imposes its reality on the inner man, whereas earlier culture more frequently originated in an internal motivation and sometimes expressed itself very awkwardly.

Culture is not an intrinsic part of suburban life; it is more like a badge or a garment to be worn on public occasions. This leads to an apparent paradox: the more culture there is, the less intrinsically meaningful it becomes. Leaders of suburban society are still concerned with making their communities still more cultured. Their emphasis is misplaced. Culture will continue to expand. The problem for suburbs today is not whether they can consume culture—their appetite is voracious and perhaps insatiable—but whether they can produce it. Since the modern world is being rapidly suburbanized, that question has to be faced wherever we happen to reside.

Any answer would at present be premature. Suburbs are too new and too various—despite a certain sameness—for us to do more than speculate about them. However, there is a real possibility that in any environment which not only lacks an authentic Bohemia or anything like the old ecological basis for artistic production, but also lacks performing centers, the atmosphere will continue to stifle creativity. The result at worst would be another generation of uncreative consumers for whom being cultured is simply part of the universally accepted social role to which they conform. At best, there may be a whole hoard of people who will have absorbed the techniques of culture without having first developed the capacity to use them in original ways. If this nightmare comes fully to pass, the art world will not be much different from the industrial world.

Modern art has always been rebellious. Conformist art is at present a contradiction in terms. But where in suburbia can we expect rebellion? It is the final irony that our last best hope lies with the rebellious youth who may save us all from suffocation by suburban culture.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Given its transparency, the suburban milieu could some day yield art. Sensitive young men may be able to see through the posing and posturing of their parents and neighbors. Indeed, their insight should be better than that of the professional sociologist who is as likely to be charmed by the "gentility" of suburban society as the bona fide suburbanite himself. The widespread practice of child psychology notwithstanding, there is already evidence that suburban children frequently rebel against the gentler forms of parental domination, just as their forebears broke out against cruder and more vulgar inadequacies and misunderstandings. Whether such rebellion can be translated into art is an open question, but we see a glimmering of hope in, say, one or two stories of Phillip Roth—who is incredibly facile, richly corrosive and unbelievably young.

Insofar as this kind of rebellion is directed by gifted youth against their parents and against their parents' environment, but not against art itself, a new source of creativity may be discovered. It is conceivable that expatriate suburbanites will move to vestigial bohemias in the city and come to terms with themselves through art. One can imagine a literature in which hostility to the suburbs will then be the most significant cultural outcome of suburban life, just as hostility to the town was the most significant cultural outcome of life in the American small town of several decades ago. For that, however, we shall still have to have cities to which young refugees from the suburbs can flee.

Jean Bazaine

A FRENCH PAINTER VISITS MOSCOW*

I went to Moscow, invited by the General Commissariat of Expositions, to talk to the Russians about painting. As my theme I had chosen "the artist and the world today." This would allow me to touch upon delicate subjects such as freedom of art and thus human freedom, and, indirectly, the question of socialist-realist painting. My lecture had been sent on and translated into Russian three weeks before my arrival.

Two hours before the meeting, I was forewarned that I would probably speak to an empty hall since the invitations had been systematically withdrawn from those invited. This permitted a correspondent of a French rightist newspaper to tell me smilingly, "So, you're planning to create a diplomatic incident? That suits me to a T!"

Despite this the hall was filled to

* Reprinted in slightly condensed form from *Esprit*, January, 1962, with permission.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

overflowing. A serious, attentive public whose strained expressions were rather intimidating. I learned later that it was in its majority made up of students, painters, "engineers" and also some workers. At the beginning of the session my interpreter took care to inform the audience that we were talking about painting and those not interested could leave. Only a few people left the hall.

I began amidst a heavy silence. My lecture had been divided into paragraphs which my translator read after me. The first indications of a *détente* took place the moment I declared that a painter was a man who, in general, had no desire to go to the Moon. Then, each time that I raised questions of freedom of the artist and his art, or affirmations of the rights and dignity of man, of the unconscious need for the artist to be in a state of "permanent revolution" etc., the applause became longer and longer. At the end, many pertinent questions were asked from all sides, either orally or on slips of paper. I was able to save a few and offer some examples here. There were even one or two "provocateurs"—I give some excerpts from one of their longer texts —who were booed.

At the end of about two hours the entire hall rushed up to the stage to demand that the text be translated (later, it was dittoed). Some, in tears, embraced me, offering me touching little gifts; one of them told me in his awkward French, "that he could now live ten years longer." I rediscovered intact the old Russia which the look of the streets had almost made me forget. The evening ended up in a healthy brawl which three policemen quickly put an end to, this last episode being told to me later since I myself, ill-prepared for the enthusiasm of public meetings, had disappeared at the height of the melee . . .

The next day I repeated my lecture to the Circle of Friends of the Fine Arts, in an old private mansion formally decorated with admirable panels by Bonnard. Many of my previous night's listeners had come back, including my "provocateurs," and the crowd filled even the corridors. I had to wait more than half an hour in order to begin, those in charge demanding, with good humor but not without vigor, that a larger hall be offered to us. They did not obtain one, but the session lasted three hours.

If I tell these facts here it is precisely because I felt to what an extent this overwhelming welcome on the part of the Soviet public secretly echoed deeper and more poignant words than those I was able to utter. Painting, a forbidden fruit and thus charged with all the promise of life and eternity, has become at the same time the symbol of man's freedom and dignity. This alone, I feel, suffices to explain this fervor.

Many young artists asked me, after these meetings, for my address. They have written begging me to send them art reviews. I regret that I do not feel I have the right to publish these moving letters. Braque, Miro, Klee, Kandinsky seem to me to be the painters they are best acquainted with; by contrast, they scarcely spoke to me of Picasso.

One of these young artists I was able to meet at his home (not without many detours and difficulties to avoid this becoming known). He had gotten together a few friends in the nine square meters he proudly called

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his home. They showed me their awkwardly done canvases, full of contradictory and badly assimilated influences but often having some—I do not know how to describe it—some light by which an artist is recognized. I told them how sensitive and beautiful the light of Moscow seemed to me. During the entire visit, recordings of Bach and Mozart were played to prevent the neighbors hearing that we spoke in French.

The attitude of the Russian public toward the recent exposition of French painting has been talked about a good deal—often falsifying the truth. I can affirm that there was hardly a place in the entire Exposition where the crowd was denser and, especially, more passionate. The smiles and fits of anger—why not?—were directed almost exclusively at works of expressionist inspiration, those more directly provocative. Most of the time the identical process took place: two people, unacquainted with each other, would get into a discussion in front of a painting. Immediately, thirty other visitors gathered around them and launched into a vehement and interminable discussion.

Mme. Froment-Meurice, who organized the cultural section and received Mr. Khrushchev, offered me precise details on this. Upon his arrival at the Exposition, Mr. Khrushchev asked to see the paintings. At length and seriously, he toured the halls, in spite of what may have been said, stopping more readily before "figurative" canvases and stifling a smile with his hand only before the Picasso. At the reception that followed, he lifted his glass to culture, then more particularly to painting, adding (and this seems to me a trait of modesty): "To what I understand."

(Here follows the lecture of Jean Bazaine, stressing the themes mentioned above.—EDITOR)

QUESTIONS ASKED AFTER THE LECTURE:

1) Is the gap between painter and spectator growing?

2) You say now that before adopting the form of art which occupies you at this time you had painted according to nature. Is this the right way for a young painter?

3) a. Is the painter Filosov known in France?

b. What do you think of Pougny?

c. What is the role of the Russian school from 1900 to 1920 in the development of world painting and in particular of French art?

4) Since everything in painting is a problem of development, how does one go beyond non-figurative painting in France?

5) Do you find it "legitimate" to express the great tasks of art not only in an abstract fashion, but in some concrete form of the visible world?

6) Criteria for judging a painting? Possibilities of diverse opinions?

7) a. Why the decline of Surrealism?

b. Does not the *rapprochement* between the "abstract" painting and whatever in nature has inspired it contradict the very essence of abstract art?

8) Are not figurative works (Bonnard, Despiau, etc.) in your opinion superior in quality to abstract paintings?

9) If abstract art is progressive does that mean that, with time, the painting of each people will arrive at this way of expressing reality?

10) Your attitude toward present-day Soviet painting.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

11) Do you know any abstract Soviet painters and can you see them in Paris?

12) You went from figurative to non-figurative. Are there any painters who have done the opposite?

13) Did you get advanced instruction other than pictorial?

14) What do you think of the Picasso at the Exposition?

15) Don't you believe that painting will have more and more a scientific foundation and that the totality of certain deterministic laws will have an ever-greater importance?

16) By what means does abstract art, which essentially expresses an interior "I," serve people whose "I" is entirely different, and to whom it becomes comprehensible only after two hours of explanation? Is this art concerned about the public to whom it addresses itself?

17) There are only well-known painters at the Exposition. Do your young painters find ways of showing their work and what does your youth bring to art?

18) It is often affirmed that abstract painting is:

a) reactionary, insofar as it is the official art of the ruling capitalists in their struggle against the working class, progress, etc.

b) that it is charlatanism.

c) that no talent is required to paint an abstract picture. In this connection, the example of monkeys', childrens' scribblings, etc., are evoked.

Is all this true? If not, how can it be refuted?

19) Most Honored Monsieur Bazaine:

"Yesterday, during the conference, a question was sent up to you but did not reach you, thanks to the kindness of your guardians. The note was folded in four and hidden in the pocket of one of the guardians watching over the security of French culture. Nonetheless, I repeat my question.

"So, Monsieur Bazaine, can you reply? What are the criteria thanks to which one may distinguish between a scribble and a masterpiece of abstract art?

"You have publicly declared that you would give away with joy your works to those who would truly appreciate them. Is this because in *democratic France* one cannot present his works to those one respects?

"Or else is painting for you only a source of income?

"And finally if painting is for you only a source of income, of francs you receive from wealthy people who know nothing about it, then how can you speak of freedom of the painter? How dare you consider yourself a free artist if you paint only for a mass of snobs? Can a painter consider himself free if he lowers himself to serve the wealth of the filthy rich? Etc., etc."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George Lichtheim

REALITY AND EXPERIENCE

An Analysis of the Draft Program of the CPSU*

A document such as the 1961 *Draft Program of the CPSU* serves so many different purposes that at first sight it may appear pointless to try to classify it with reference to the tradition it purports to incarnate. It is obvious that its prime use lies in the propaganda field, and that for the rest its significance is likely to depend on shifting political alignments within the ruling Party apparatus; itself a governing body not clearly differentiated from the dominant social stratum of Soviet society, including, as it does, genuine representatives of the latter along with veterans of the Stalinist epoch and spokesmen of a Leninist tradition which almost half a century ago supplied the "professional revolutionaries" with an operational code.

A proper textual analysis of the document would have to distinguish all these strata, relate what is genuinely operational to the actual policies of the Party leadership, draw the necessary distinctions between the general framework of Leninist philosophy and the specific elements of current Soviet theory and practice, and in addition, supply the kind of critical commentary that Marx appended to the *Gotha Program* of 1875; or, if one wants to be more modest, Lenin's own rather long-winded "Notes on Plekhanov's Draft Program" in 1902 (*Collected Works,* vol. VI). Instead, I propose to address myself to a single subject, namely, the status of the *Program* within the general tradition of "Marxism-Leninism," so-called.

I must make it plain at the outset that I regard "Marxism-Leninism" as a misnomer, insofar as it treats Marx as a precursor of Lenin, and Leninism consequently as the realization of the "union of theory and practice." But since the entire Soviet world-view is based on the assertion that Leninism is the contemporary form of Marxism, it is necessary to begin from there, whatever one's own views. This is the proper starting point for considering the *Program,* since as an intellectual production it is held together and validated by precisely this claim. The first step,

* This article is adapted from a chapter which will appear in a forthcoming book, *The USSR and the Future: An Analysis of the New Program of the CPSU,* soon to be published by Praeger.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

therefore, must consist in asking what one means by Leninism, and in what sense the *Draft Program* is to be regarded as a Leninist document.*

There are perfectly good theoretical reasons for adopting this approach, but there is also an eminently practical one: namely, the fact that we are dealing with the outlook of the Russian State Party, whose founder was the creator of the Soviet regime, pre- and post-Stalin. The danger of forgetting this is vividly illustrated by those Western writings which somehow manage to treat Bolshevism in abstraction from the Russian Revolution.

A recent collection of essays by a well-known British sociologist includes a chapter entitled "The Bolshevik Ideology" from which no one who did not already know it would gather that Bolshevism grew on Russian soil, or that it numbered among its ancestors some eminent 19th-century Russian thinkers who were not Marxists, but belonged to an earlier stratum. Among historians of the Revolution this is common ground, but how much weight should one assign to it in an evaluation of a document published in 1961? As it happens, 1961 was the centenary of the emancipation decree which ended serfdom, but did not satisfy either the peasants or the radical intelligentsia. In the following year Chernyshevsky was sent to prison, where he wrote *What Is to Be Done?*, a title that was to become doubly famous when Lenin cribbed it forty years later. Prior to that Chernyshevsky had published an essay on Mill's economics which drew praise from Marx, in the preface to the second edition of *Capital.* So here is a link between Marx and Lenin, which of course has always delighted all good Leninists. Yet Chernyshevsky (together with Herzen) represents the intellectual core of Populist socialism *(Narodnichestvo),* which Leninism is alleged to have overcome (with some help from Plekhanov and earlier Russian Marxists who were not yet Leninists).

If one suggests that Leninism is an offshoot of Populism, or at least that it possesses two ancestors: Marx and Chernyshevsky, one runs the risk of being accused of dealing in willful paradoxes. Yet readers of Venturi's great history of Populism will be aware that the Russian revolutionary movement which triumphed in 1917 has an intellectual ancestry that runs parallel with West European socialism but must not be simply identified with it. And anyone who takes the trouble to wade through the 877 pages of the official 1960 handbook entitled *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism,* as well as the more ideological sections of the 1961 *Draft Program of the CPSU,* will discover ample evidence that the *Weltanschauung* of the ruling State party stems directly from that of the Russian radicals of a hundred years ago, none of whom were Marxists, though they all hoped and believed that Russia could show the world something new by "building socialism."

* For the convenience of the reader it may be added that many of the relevant doctrinal points are discussed at length in the October 1961 issue of the London quarterly, *Survey,* of which I have made use in what follows. But anyone who wants to relate the *Draft Program* to the much lengthier exposition of the Leninist philosophy in the 1960 *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism* will inevitably discover that he is in the presence of a genuine world-view, not just a statement of aims.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is no need here to go at length into the question of Marx's views on the prospects of Russian socialism, but since Chernyshevsky has been mentioned, it is worth quoting at least one *locus classicus:* Marx's letter to the editors of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* in November 1877. Here, after a critical side-glance at Herzen's Pan-Slavism, we find another tribute to Chernyshevsky, and then the well-known statement: "If Russia continues to pursue the path she has followed since 1861, she will lose the finest chance ever offered by history to a people, and undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime."* This passage, by the way, shows that Marx remained a good Hegelian to the end, and never became the kind of determinist he sometimes appears to be, especially when interpreted by Engels: If history offers genuine choices to peoples as well as individuals, and if Russia in 1877 could be said to be in danger of missing a historic opportunity, namely that of skipping the capitalist stage of development, it would seem that Marx reserved a much larger place to free will than is commonly supposed.

In any case he did not regard the capitalist form of evolution as the only possible one, and he made it quite clear in this interesting letter that, so far as Russia was concerned, he agreed with Chernyshevsky in holding that there was no need for the village community to disappear. On the contrary, he thought Russia could very well reap all the fruits of modern economic progress "by developing the historical conditions specifically her own." In principle this was quite in accordance with Marx's view that European capitalism was historically unique and for the rest it was a question of fact; or perhaps a question of will. Once the liberal thesis that capitalism represented the normal and inevitable form of progress had been rejected, it followed that new countries about to enter the modern age might experiment with new social forms. So here apparently is evidence that Marx was a good Leninist *avant la lettre,* but of course this conclusion imposes itself only because of the fact that on this particular issue he happened to be in agreement with Chernyshevsky, the apostle of Populism. Whether he would have maintained this position had he lived to witness the startling efflorescence of Russian capitalism in the 1890s is a different question.

In retrospect we can now see that all the internal conflicts within the revolutionary movement turned on the question whether Russia could skip the capitalist phase and "build socialism" on the basis of her own, fortunately still intact, pre-capitalist foundations. In this respect Lenin harks back to Populism, but of course it can be argued that by 1917 Populism was out of date, and that Marx himself would have counselled against an attempt to go back on the whole evolution of the preceding decades. Certainly most Russian Marxists in 1917 were against Lenin and treated his coup d'état as a utopian venture. Still, the fact remains that it came off and that Leninism has now become the theory

* Cited after the text in *Marx-Engels Selected Correspondence,* Moscow, 1956. The French original runs: "Si la Russie continue à marcher dans le sentier suivi depuis 1861, elle perdra la plus belle chance que l'histoire ait jamais offerte à un peuple, pour subir toutes les péripeties fatales du régime capitaliste."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and practice of a successful revolution in a backward country which *did* evolve an alternative to capitalism.

For obvious reasons this historical background has obliged the Soviet elite to undertake a tacit reevaluation of the Populist heritage. As the regime comes to identify itself with accomplishments which go far toward turning Russia into a modern industrial country on a non-capitalist basis, it inevitably sees itself as the inheritor of those socialists who from about 1850 onward preached Russia's mission to show the decadent West how socialism could be built on virgin soil uncorrupted by capitalism, liberalism, inividualism, and other tiresome Western inventions. One has only to read Herzen to hear the first faint bars of a music whose full impact crashes upon the ear in the 1961 *Draft Program*. And the fact that Marx protested against Herzen's notion that (as he put it) "rotten old Europe should be regenerated by the victory of Pan-Slavism," and that this protest had appeared in print side by side with his appreciative reference to Chernyshevsky, only heightens the irony. In point of fact Soviet patriotism today is sustained, if not by Pan-Slavism, at any rate by the contrast between virtuous socialist Russia and "rotten old Europe," to which, of course, rotten America must now be added.

As for liberalism, it had always been designated in Bolshevik literature by the adjective "rotten" long before Stalin employed this vocabulary to justify his massacre of the Old Bolsheviks. Briefly then, it would appear that the present-day Russian Communist party has really made the best of both worlds and integrated the Marxian heritage, or at least the Marxist terminology, within a tradition which can perhaps be described as National-Socialist: in the sense that from the very start it envisaged socialism as the specifically Russian answer to a specifically Russian problem, namely, what was to be Russia's future *as a nation,* given the fact that the Old Regime had lost its historic sanction and that Western liberalism was somehow not appropriate to Russian conditions? If one feels like being paradoxical, one may say that Marxism became the means of reconstituting Russian National-Socialism on a more respectable basis. In this the Party was, of course, greatly aided by the fact that Marxism contains a genuinely universal idea, so that the regime could get under way with an internationalist creed: unlike Fascism which subsequently came a cropper among other reasons because it lacked the universal content which every genuinely world-shaking movement must possess.

Nonetheless, what is called Soviet Marxism—or in the official terminology "Marxism-Leninism"—is today essentially a national ideology; it is comparable in this respect with French Republicanism or the "American Idea," which latter may be said to embody the universal idea ot 18th-century liberalism within the specific American framework. This dialectic (to employ a term much in vogue though little understood in the USSR) runs through all major revolutions and accounts for the fact that nations are able to identify themselves quite naively with what was originally a universal message addressed to an elite of enthusiasts. As the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

idea is clothed with flesh, the flesh of course is sanctified and loses some of its sinful aspects. Thus the State is no longer an oppressor if it serves the ends of socialism, but becomes the institutional framework of a perfect democracy; or the Russian nation is not a nation like any other, but the bearer of a revelation of such inestimable value to the rest of mankind that minor misdemeanors, e.g., the annexation of foreign territories, must be regarded as the *faux frais* of world-historical progress. This too has its parallels elsewhere, though in fairness one must concede that it probably represents a genuine delusion, not simply an excuse for making the "camp of socialism" co-extensive with the habitable globe.

II

What we have before us then is not simply a Party program in the ordinary sense of the term, but a document which formulates the manner in which the ruling political elite of the USSR views itself and wants to be viewed by others. To that extent one has to qualify the earlier statement that the prime significance of the *Program* is propagandist. The difficulty with such a characterization is that it credits the authors with the ability to distinguish between what is really going on and what is affirmed in official texts. But there is no evidence that they are in fact capable of making such a distinction, except here and there in relation to facts of a lower order, such as the incidence of unemployment in the Western world. In such cases they customarily offer more or less fraudulent comparisons between standards of living and other claims which are part of the official make-believe. When it comes to the fundamentals of the Leninist faith, including the division of the world into "socialist" and "capitalist" blocs, all the evidence points to the conclusion that what is officially affirmed is genuinely held to be true.

Notwithstanding Chinese (or Albanian) charges of "revisionism," there is nothing to suggest that the authors of the *Draft Program* have come anywhere near to accepting the heretical notion that socialism is a world-wide trend, operative in the West as well as in the East, and that there are many roads to the final goal. On the contrary, the *Program* goes out of its way to affirm that "the experience of the USSR has shown that people can come to socialism only as a result of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat." Thus the entire Social-Democratic tradition, which for half a century before 1917 was associated with the teachings of Marx and Engels, is once more declared to be incompatible with Leninism, as indeed it is. Furthermore, we read: "Socialism, the inevitability of which was scientifically foretold by Marx and Engels—Socialism the plan of which was drafted by Lenin, has become actual reality in the Soviet Union." This insistence that everything Marx and Engels said pointed in one direction only, namely that taken by Lenin, is central to the official ideology. The founder of Islam asserted that the Old Testament was a preparatory stage toward his own revelation. Lenin's successors are clearly determined to claim similar status for *their* body of revealed truth, so that at any rate it should not be pos-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sible to say of Lenin what Marx once said of Bakunin: that he was a "Mohammed without a Koran."

But of course the process works both ways: If Leninism retains Koranic status it does so only by relating itself constantly to the antecedent body of revealed truth communicated by Marx and Engels. Hence the self-interpretation of the ruling elite involves the acceptance of a body of doctrine originally evolved as a critique of West European society, in terms of that society's own aspirations. The resulting tension should not be underrated; however much Soviet Marxism may have been bowdlerized, one must not overlook the fact that the regime does create genuine difficulties for itself by propagating a doctrine which is inherently subversive of much that goes on in the Soviet Union. The gap between theory and practice would certainly be narrower, for example, if the Party were not committed to the idea that the State is going to wither away. This is the extreme case, but there are other problematic claims, e.g., the forecast that all remaining differences between classes or between town and country are to disappear, and that the distinction between physical and intellectual labor (and therewith the status of the intelligentsia as a separate stratum) is to come to an end. This, of course, is orthodox Marxism, in the sense that Marx (in the *Critique of the Gotha Program)* specified these traits as belonging to a fully developed Communist society. But the *Draft Program* actually declares that this is to happen within the near future, which is rather a different matter from simply laying down a desideratum. The least one can say is that if by 1981 substantial social cleavages still exist, there is going to be trouble for the surviving members of the drafting committee.

They may, of course, put the blame elsewhere. After all, the Preamble to Part II reads: "The building of a Communist society has become the direct practical task of the Soviet people." This puts the responsibility squarely upon the community as a whole, so that if things should go wrong it might be argued that the people were not up to the great task presented to them by the Party. Unfortunately the sentence immediately following runs: "The gradual development of Socialism into Communism is in objective conformity with a natural phenomenon—it was prepared by the whole previous development of Soviet Socialist society." We are not told if that also covers Stalin's misdemeanors, but the general sense is clear enough: What is taking place in the USSR is not only desirable, but by a happy chance it also conforms to a necessary development. Communism is being "built" by the conscious effort of the people, but looked at from a different angle it may also be said to be growing spontaneously from its natural foundations. This, of course, is simply a further development of the paradox embodied in the familiar two-fold thesis that the October Revolution was a great event because it confirmed Marx's predictions about the inevitable course of history, and that Lenin was a great man because he inaugurated a completely new era.

In fact, Marx was careful not to say anything about inevitable devel-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opments—on the contrary, he said Russia might or might not miss its chance—and the importance of Lenin resides precisely in the fact that he exploited a unique and fleeting opportunity. As an ideology Soviet Marxism is precariously poised between the determinist notion that the October Revolution was "lawful" and inevitable, and the voluntarist idea that the Bolshevik vanguard, led by Lenin, broke away from the entire previous course of European history. To be a good Leninist one must be able to believe both statements to be true and balance them simultaneously inside one's head. One can then proceed to the further point of affirming that the next stage, namely the building of Communism in the USSR, is in conformity with determined necessity, while it also represents a great task now before the Party and the people. In strict logic the notion of a task involves the possibility of failure, but this is not admitted. Communism has to be both inevitable and freely willed, and the Party is there to see to it that both aspects are constantly held in balance. The Party, in fact, decides what is or is not inevitable, and if it lays down an order of priorities, it does so in the light of its superior insight into what is or is not possible and/or desirable. This insight it owes to revelation.

The quasi-theological character of this thinking comes out in that part of the document where Communist morality is first described as something that is spontaneously developing, and then converted into a set of normative rules delivered from on high. First, the obligatory bow to history: "In the course of the transition to Communism, the moral principles of society become increasingly important, the sphere of action of the moral factor expands, the importance of administrative control of human relations diminishes accordingly." Next the authoritarian counterpoint: "*The Party holds* [our italics] that the moral code of the builder of Communism should [sic!] comprise the following principles," and there follows a long string of rather commonplace ethical precepts, including patriotism, honesty, and devotion to one's family (!), which no Rotarian could possibly take exception to. What this really amounts to, of course, is that modern industrial man—whether he staffs a chamber of commerce or a state-owned factory—must display a minimum of responsibility if the whole show is not to collapse. It is therefore essential to inculcate certain moral attitudes and work disciplines which, broadly speaking, are the same in East and West, except that in the USSR they carry the label "Communist morality." But the fact that they have to be painfully inculcated, instead of flowering freely from the new soil, makes it rather awkward to talk of the present epoch as being a transitional phase from Socialism to Communism. One begins to sympathize with Molotov's reported strictures on the claim that Socialism has already been fully established.

From a theoretical viewpoint the noteworthy thing about this awkward tension between actual circumstances and normative rules is that it reproduces the kind of dualism to which Marx was hostile and which it was his ultimate aim to overcome. Quite apart from the fact that the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

content of Soviet morality is not sensationally different from what is regarded as moral in Manchester or Pittsburgh, the authoritarian tone of the Party's pronouncements discloses a state of affairs with which sociologists are familiar: The claims made by society upon the individual are resisted by the latter, or at least not spontaneously recognized as being in harmony with one's own personal strivings. Since Communism had once been defined by Marx as a state of affairs in which the disjunction between individual wills and social needs has been overcome, it would appear that Soviet society still has a long way to go.

But there is a further contradiction: the *Program* tells us that "Communism makes the elementary standards of morality and justice, which were distorted or shamelessly flouted under the rule of exploiters, into inviolable rules for relations both between individuals and between peoples. Communist morality encompasses the fundamental norms of human morality which the masses of the people evolved in the course of millenniums as they struggled against vice and social oppression." This again is good old-fashioned Populism, but hardly in accordance with Marx's notion about history. Rather confusingly the next sentence adds, as a kind of afterthought: "The revolutionary morality of the working class is of particular importance to the moral advancement of society." So the working class has something new to contribute to the age-old heritage of toiling mankind, but we are not told exactly what it is. Lastly, "as Socialist and Communist construction progresses, Communist morality is enriched with new principles, a new content." Follow the rather Rotarian precepts already mentioned. What all this may have to do with the emergence of the New Man (which we are also promised) remains unclear.

It would seem that this confusion is another aspect of that cleavage between libertarian rhetoric and authoritarian practice which runs through the whole of Soviet society. One has to bear in mind that Marxism was originally a critique of Western liberalism in terms of liberalism's own proclaimed goals. These included a certain precarious balance beween state and society, the state tending to represent the "citizen" as against the "bourgeois," to employ Marx's terminology. The state, that is to say, represented the general will, together with the official morality of society, as against the selfish and immoral strivings of the individual. At any rate that was how the matter was viewed in the authoritarian philosophy of Hegel, where the state is quite consistently treated as morally superior to the members of civil society. Marx reacted against Hegel partly because he regarded this distinction as absurd and intolerable. Society, he thought, could very well do without the state, on condition that the citizen took precedence over the bourgeois. Soviet Marxism is officially committed to the same aim, but its outlook is idealist and authoritarian, and its emphasis lies not on what people spontaneously want to do but on what the Party (which is of course identical with the State) considers good for them. It may therefore be said to have stood Marx on his head, at any rate insofar as Marxism represented an attempt

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to transcend the dichotomy of individual choice and collective restraint.

The elaborate rigmarole about "Communist morality" in the *Draft Program* is senseless in terms of Marx's description of Communism as a society in which the subordination of the individual to the division of labor—that is, to social constraint based on economic necessity—has come to an end. Given such a state of affairs it would clearly be superfluous to subject people to the kind of social discipline envisaged in the *Program*. The minimum of work that would still have to be performed under full Communism (as Marx understood it) would be done freely by individuals no longer subjected to "the enslaving division of labor." It is only against this background that the classless society can also be seen as a stateless one. The need for a central authority with coercive power disappears because the objective rationality of society is no longer in conflict with the individual needs and desires of its members. For the same reason official morality loses its political character and is no longer differentiated from private morality, i.e., from what the individual regards as desirable. One may treat this whole perspective as utopian, but that is a different matter. Given the formal commitment of Soviet Marxism to the aims sketched out in the classic texts, it is incumbent upon the authors of the *Draft Program* to explain how their authoritarian ideology can justify itself on theoretical grounds.

III

Of course, the real, i.e., non-ideological explanation is simple enough. The *Draft Program* is very precisely a Socialist document in the Marxian sense of the term, not a Communist one. This comes out plainly enough in the enormous emphasis laid upon production, which would be utterly misplaced were the authors really concerned with what lies beyond a scarcity economy. Even setting aside the fact that the promised welfare legislation is not very startling by Western standards, the mere fact that the central core of the document relates to the need for rapid economic growth under conditions of intensive rationalization and mechanization would be enough to discredit the claim that what we have here is a blueprint for a Communist society. What we have in fact is a prospectus for a state-controlled system, with a fast rate of growth and a planned economy; in other words, a Socialist society in the precise sense of the term.

The *Program* recognizes in an oblique fashion that Socialism has not yet been established in the USSR, and sketches its future outline, but does so in the guise of claiming to describe the classless and stateless Communist society of the future. This equivocation runs through the entire document, starting with the opening paragraph of Part II, where "the gradual development of Socialism into Communism" is described as the task of the near future, only to be qualified a few pages further on, where we read: "The chief economic task of the Party and the Soviet people is to create *the material-technical base of Communism* within the course of two decades."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now, the "material-technical base of Communism" is simply another name for Socialism, bearing in mind the definition which Marx gives to these terms in the *Critique of the Gotha Program,* a definition which is, of course, canonical for Leninists. That this is not an academic matter appears from the passage a little further on where we read: "It is therefore necessary to raise labor productivity in industry in ten years more than twice, and in twenty years by four or five times." In other words, the so-called building of Communism reduced itself in practice to the construction of a modern industrial economy which is to compete with the United States. This may be a legitimate aim for a country which has chosen a non-capitalist way of modernizing itself, but it has little to do with what Marxists have traditionally called Communism. But then the entire document, from start to finish, is nothing but an elaborate attempt to side-step the Marxian distinction between the lower and the higher stages of Socialist society.

It is impossible to go into details, but the central political paradox of the whole enterprise needs to be brought out. The *Draft Program* has this to say about the rule of the Party:

> Unlike all preceding socio-economic formations, Communist society does not develop sporadically, but as a result of the conscious and purposeful efforts of the masses, led by the Marxist-Leninist Party. The Communist party, which unites the foremost representatives of the working people and is closely connected with the masses, which enjoys unbounded authority among the people and understands the laws of social development, provides proper leadership in Communist construction as a whole, giving it an organized, planned and scientifically based character.

Leaving aside the clap-trap about the Party's close connection with the masses, the authoritarian tone of this pronouncement is enough to discredit it as a statement of the Marxist faith. If Communism means anything—and Marx had a fairly clear notion of what it meant—it denotes a state of affairs where the producers control their tools and are in no need of an infallible party to tell them what to do; a party, moreover, which legitimizes itself by its superior insight into the laws of social development: laws—we are given to understand—that remain concealed from ordinary mortals.

This disjunction between everyday reality as perceived by the individual and the higher rationality of the whole body politic, which only the ruling elite can interpret, has been the justification of every entrenched governing class since the days of the Egyptian priesthood. It may be compatible with Saint-Simon, but it is certainly not compatible with Marx. The final judgment of the *Draft Program* must be that for all its employment of vulgarized Marxist terminology, it is essentially a statement of faith in an authoritarian brand of Socialism imposed upon the masses by a technocratic ruling stratum. The society it looks forward to is a hierarchical one in which final authority rests with a self-ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pointed elite. This may be Socialism of sorts; it is not Communism and never will be.

That the social order outlined in the *Program* is in fact "a society in which scarcities remain, and highly centralized planning operates, where the planner's scale of preferences dominates and the national product is divided on lines determined by himself, and where contradictions persist,"* must be evident to anyone who takes the trouble to study the document with due care for its practical implications. This raises the question why the Party leadership should have committed itself at this stage to the promise that the transition from Socialism to Communism is going to be made, or at any rate initiated, within the experience of those now living. At the political level the explanation clearly has to do with the need to associate the post-Stalin regime with something at least as grandiose as Stalin's own construction of "Socialism in one country."

For obvious reasons the fact that it is simply intended to complete this particular construction disappears behind a cloud of ambiguous language about "Communism"—the latter so interpreted as to leave the planners in control of a highly centralized scarcity economy, in which commodity production, cash remuneration, and economic differentials to promote efficiency, are to continue. To that extent the operation has a pragmatic character, in that it enables the leadership to formulate its actual policies in traditional language. But there must come a point where the discrepancy between "Socialist" reality and "Communist" terminology becomes too glaring to be overlooked. One may surmise that the traditional aims will then be reinterpreted to make room for new social realities. To some extent this has already happened. Dobb (*loc. cit.*, pp. 341-42) draws attention (though with no critical intent) to the fact that "in the discussion of the last few years it has been emphasized that the importance of commodity production and of market categories, and with this the use of economic incentives in production will continue *and even increase* [our italics] during the transition from Socialism to Communism." The *Program* indeed makes no bones about it. It says textually:

> It is necessary in the course of constructing Communism to make full use of commodity-money relations in keeping with their meaning in the period of Socialism. . . . There will be a further strengthening of the monetary and credit system... The price system should be continuously improved... Prices must to a growing extent reflect the socially necessary outlays of labor, ensure return of productive and distributive expenditures and a certain profit for every enterprise that is operating normally....

Since scarcities are to continue—and indeed probably cannot be removed under any system if economic growth is to take place, though

---

* Cf. Alfred Zaubermann, "Value, Price and Profit," *Survey*, London, October 1961, pp. 54ff; for a singularly unconvincing apologia of the *Program*, cf. Maurice Dobb, *Marxism Today*, London, November 1961, pp. 340ff.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an economically stationary society need have no definable scarcities once all "reasonable" wants are satisfied—economic rationality continues to express itself in a calculus of resources and allocations. Compared with modern capitalism, the chief difference is that the basic calculations are made by the planners, while the market—without disappearing—assumes a subordinate function. This exactly defines a Socialist society, not a Communist one, so that one must ask once again why the Party leadership should have committed itself to what, from the Marxist standpoint, is a fraudulent prospectus.

It may be argued that the ambiguous language of the *Program* does in some manner bridge the disparity between reality and ideology. To that extent it rationalizes the inherent need to restate new aims in traditional language. Yet it may also store up trouble for the future. The planners are doubtless content to operate their centralized and authoritarian system with a minimum of lip-service to such historic slogans as "to each according to his needs," as long as *they* decide what the needs are. But though the growth of welfare services supplied free of charge may help to obscure the fact that allocation "according to needs" is going to take place—even under what the *Program* calls full Communism—within a centrally planned system of scarcities, it is not possible to eliminate by a mere terminological quibble the disparity between the "needs" of the directing stratum and the "wants" of the working population.

In a dynamic industrial society the workers cannot fail to press for the conversion of mere "wants" into socially recognized "needs" which the planners would ideally be instructed by the political authority to fulfill. Within the confines of a scarcity economy, in which heavy industry continues to take precedence, this would raise serious practical problems even in an egalitarian community in which planners were free to disregard social stratification. But Soviet society is anything but egalitarian, and is steadily becoming less so, notwithstanding some recent efforts to do away with the grosser disparities in salaries.

The *Program* implicitly recognizes the difficulty of allowing for individual variations: The purpose of Communist production is stated to be "to provide all its members with material and cultural benefits according to their growing needs, their individual requirements and tastes." But what if the budding class distinctions of Soviet society should become too pronounced to be concealed any longer behind disingenuous talk about "individual requirements and tastes"? And what if at some point the more doctrinaire and puritanical wing of the Party should get the upper hand and try to enforce a measure of egalitarianism upon the privileged stratum—which also happens to be the directing stratum —in the name of Communism?

The ambiguous language of the *Program,* while it does not commit the Party to anything of the kind, does not rule out such ventures, however irrational they may appear from the viewpoint of the planners. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

latter—like their Western counterparts, whom they are beginning to resemble—are substantially committed to a technocratic version of Socialism, which the politicians are free to describe as "Communism" as long as their antics do not interfere with the operation of the system; much as in the West the disingenuous twaddle about "people's capitalism" is genially tolerated by the real controllers of the system.

This built-in contradiction between reality and appearance is politically harmless so long as it manifests itself only in the contrast between authoritarian regulation of the economic calculus and the intelligentsia's Platonic attachment to the young Marx's vision of a society which has left every form of "human self-estrangement" behind. It becomes dangerous only when the masses place their own naive interpretation upon the dogma by pressing for an egalitarian share—out of the limited supply of goods. At this point, loyalty to an accepted phraseology may not be strong enough to prevent the conversion of the political elite into a new privileged class with an appropriate ideology, one that frankly recognizes the unattainable nature of the Communist ideal. Only when that point has been reached will the official ideology begin to reflect the contradictions inherent in the structure of Soviet society.

THE COLD CIVIL WAR

"Among President Kennedy's varied cultural tastes, it now develops, is one for sham battles. Because of this late discovery the Civil War Centennial Commission has quietly reversed one of its recent policy decisions.

"The commission's major exertion in this direction was a re-enactment of the Battle of Manassas. . . . By most critical accounts, it was something less than a hit. In consequence, Dr. Allan Nevins, the celebrated historian, decided that the commission would henceforth devote itself to less strenuous activities in commemoration of the Civil War, with the emphasis on scholarship and the gentler arts.

"A few weeks ago he went to the White House to report on the commission's work.

" 'When are you going to put on another sham battle?' President Kennedy asked.

"The chairman said none was being planned.

" 'That's a pity,' Mr. Kennedy mused, 'I like sham battles.' "—From the N. Y. *Times*, May 7.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eugene Zamiatin

A LETTER TO STALIN*

On March 10, twenty-five years ago, there died in Paris, in voluntary exile, one of the finest Russian writers of the post-war period, Eugene Zamiatin. A man of rare distinction, he possessed a highly original talent. Zamiatin is particularly known for his utopian novel, We, *which paved the way for the books Aldous Huxley and George Orwell were to write later on. Zamiatin's* We *appeared "prematurely" in 1929, that is, before Western society had had a foretaste of totalitarianism.*

Zamiatin addressed the letter that follows to Stalin, motivated by his desire to leave his native land. At that time, Stalin was not yet what he was later to become after tasting years of absolute power. He was secretly flattered to be solicited directly by writers, artists, and intellectuals who, overwhelmed by insurmountable difficulties inherent in the regime, turned toward him as one appeals to the natural protector of arts and letters.

Zamiatin had speculated on Stalin's psychology, and his perception was accurate. Authorization for self-exile was granted—apparently one of the last humane acts carried out by Stalin out of some secret motive of personal pride. Just in time, too, for the affair would certainly have turned out badly later on when the tyrant's megalomania took on paranoiac forms. The letter of Zamiatin marks a date in the history of Russian letters; it describes a situation which already paralyzed writers of merit and which would shortly become a regime of terror.—EDITORS

HONORED JOSEPH VISSARIONOVITCH:

One who has been condemned to the supreme punishment—the writer of this letter—appeals to you for commutation of his punishment.

My name is no doubt known to you. For me, a writer, to be deprived

* This letter appeared in the March–April issue of *Le Contrat Social*; it is translated from the French with permission.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the right to write is the equivalent of the death penalty. Furthermore, my situation has become such that I cannot continue my work because work is inconceivable if it must be carried out in an atmosphere of systematic persecution that grows year by year.

It is not my intention to put on an act of outraged innocence. I know that in the three or four years after the revolution there were things in my writings which lent themselves to attack. I know that I have the unfortunate habit of saying not what is opportune at a given moment, but what seems to me the truth. Particularly, I have never concealed the feelings that servility, complaisance and conformism in literature arouse in me. Such things I have always regarded—and continue to regard—as degrading both to the writer and to the revoltuion. And precisely this question, which I dealt with in the review *House of Arts* (No. 1, 1920) in an incisive way which many found offensive, was the signal for launching a press campaign against me.

Since then and in various ways this campaign has continued until today. It has now reached a point that I can only call fetichistic, just as once the Christians created the Devil to more conveniently personify Evil in all its form. Criticism has made of me the Devil of Soviet literature. Spitting upon the Devil is considered a noble deed and everyone does so, according to his lights. Some diabolical design is hunted for in everything I publish. To find it, they did not hesitate to endow me even with the gift of prophecy. Thus, in my story "God," published in the review *Annals* in 1916, a certain critic went so far as to see a ". . . mocking of the Revolution at the time of the adoption of the NEP program." In my narrative, "The Monk Erasmus," written in 1920, another critic named Machbitz-Verov discerned a "parable of leaders made wise after the NEP." Independently of the contents of my writings, my signature alone was enough for it to be declared criminal. Recently, in March of this year, *Oblit* (Regional Literary Censorship Committee) took steps which removed all doubts. I had revised the translation of Sheridan's *School for Scandal* for the *Academia* edition and had written an article on the life and work of the author. In this article it goes without saying there was not, nor could there be, anything scandalous on my part. Nevertheless, *Oblit* not only forbade publication of my article, but even forbade the publishing house the right to mention my name as editor of the translation. It was only after appealing to Moscow and when *Glavlit* had let it be understood that, after all, it was not possible to act with such naive frankness, that permission was given to publish both my article and my criminal name.

I cite this fact because it indicates in a bare, chemically pure way, the attitude that exists toward me. From numerous other facts I shall cite another which deals not simply with an article, but with a dramatic work of considerable scope on which I had worked for nearly three years. I was positive that my play, a tragedy entitled *Attila,* would once and for all silence those who delighted in picturing me as some sort of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obscurantist. I had, so it would appear, every reason to believe this. The play had been read before a gathering of the artistic council of the Leningrad Grand Dramatic Theater to which representatives of eighteen city factories had been invited. Here are excerpts from their reports, cited in the proceedings of the meeting held May 15, 1928.

The representatives of the Volodarski factory wrote, "It is a play by a modern author who treats the subject of the class struggle during antiquity in harmony with the present. . . . Ideologically speaking, the play is completely acceptable. . . . The play makes a powerful impression and destroys the reproach made against contemporary dramaturgy that it fails to offer good plays. . . ." The Lenin factory representative, noting the play's revolutionary character, found that it "recalls Shakespeare and his work in its artistic value. The play is a tragedy, filled with action; it will impassion the spectator." A hydro-mechanical factory representative stated that "the play is powerful and captivating throughout." He recommended that its presentation coincide with the theatrical jubilee.

So far as Shakespeare is concerned the comrade workers have gone too far—granted. But in any case, Maxim Gorky wrote of this play that he considered it "of the highest value, both from the literary and social point of view, and that its heroic subject and tone are most useful for our times." The theater agreed to produce the play, the *Glavrepertkom* (principal repertory committee) authorized it and then. . . . Was it shown to the working-class audience whose representatives had shown such appreciation? No, the play, half of whose rehearsals had already taken place, and which had already been publicly announced by posters, was banned. On the insistence of *Oblit.*

The melancholy fate of my *Attila* tragedy was a personal tragedy for me. After that, the futility of all attempts made to change my situation appeared clear to me, as well as the well-known incident soon to occur with regard to my novel *We* and Pilniak's *Mahagony*. To destroy the devil any trick will do of course. And so the novel written ten years before in 1920 was presented, at the same time as *Mahagony*, as my newest and latest work. This persecution was without precedent in Soviet literature and was noted even in the foreign press. Everything was done to bar any future work for me. My comrades of the day before, the publishing houses and the theaters began to fear any contact with me. My books were forbidden to circulate in the libraries. My play *The Flea*, which had played successfully at the Mxat II (hall of the Moscow Arts Theater) for four seasons was withdrawn from the repertory, etc. [Here Zamiatin recounts a series of measures taken against him by the Soviet authorities which culminated in his total suppression as a writer.]

•

According to the Soviet code, after the death penalty the next lowest degree of punishment is the criminal's expulsion beyond the country's boundaries. If I really am a criminal who deserves punishment, I believe

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it ought not to be, in spite of everything, anything so painful as my literary death. This is why I plead that my condemnation be replaced by expulsion from the USSR, with my wife given the right to accompany me. But if I am not a criminal, I ask that I be temporarily permitted to leave for a year abroad accompanied by my wife, it being understood that I shall return as soon as it is possible to serve the literature of great ideas without courting mean-minded men, and as soon as we shall have changed—at least partly—our way of envisaging the role of writers. And such a time is already close at hand, I am sure, because as soon as the establishment of the material base will have succeeded, the question of creating the superstructure of an art and a literature truly worth the revolution will inevitably be posed.

I know. It will not be easy for me to live abroad either, for over there I cannot be in the camp of reaction. My past indicates this convincingly. I was a member of the Bolshevik Party in Czarist times; I knew prison, two deportations and a trial during the war for having written an anti-militarist story. I know that if here, because of my habit of writing according to my conscience and not on command, I am accused of being a "rightist," over there sooner or later, and for the same reason, I will be charged with Bolshevism. But even in the most difficult circumstances, I will not be condemned to silence there; I will find some way of writing and getting published, even in another language than Russian. If circumstances deny me—temporarily, I hope—the possibility of being a Russian writer, perhaps as with the Polish Joseph Conrad—it will be possible for me to temporarily be an English writer since I have already written in Russian about England. . . . To write in English is, for me, hardly more difficult than writing in Russian. For a long time, Ilya Ehrenbourg, while remaining a Soviet writer, has contributed particularly to European literature; he is translated into many foreign languages. Why should what is permitted Ehrenbourg be denied me? I shall bring up another name here: Boris Pilniak. Like me these last years he has been the principal target of the critics; along with me he has played the role of the Devil. Yet, to rest from this persecution, he was allowed to travel abroad. Why should what is permitted Pilniak be denied me?

I could base my request to leave on other motives which, while more banal, are nonetheless serious. To cure myself of an old and chronic illness, colitis, and to produce two of my plays which have been translated into English and Italian. . . . Such motives are authentic, but I do not wish to conceal the essential reason for this request for authorization to leave the country with my wife: it is the hopeless situation in which I, as a writer, find myself here; it is the sentence of death pronounced against me here as a writer.

The exceptional solicitude which you have accorded other writers who have appealed to you permits me to hope that my request will also receive favorable consideration.

EUGENE ZAMIATIN
June, 1931

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS

To Get People Moving

UTOPIAN ESSAYS AND PRACTICAL PROPOSALS, by Paul Goodman. Random House. 289 pp. 1962. $5.00.

Some of the "practical proposals" in Paul Goodman's collection of essays are: Solve the traffic problem by banning private cars from Manhattan; rebuild a few of America's ugly small towns to show what might be done by non-bureaucratic planning on a manageable scale; create work camps for youth modelled broadly on the CCC to give young people a sense of useful work, a needed refuge from the family and to carry out Goodman's suggested projects for reshaping the physical environment; legalize pornography, since the present policy of censorship under various "obscenity" statutes "not only must continue to fail, but in itself keeps on creating the evil it combats." Several of the longer essays on Utopian thinking, applied science and the new spirit of contemporary youth convey adequately Goodman's larger assumptions and central insights as a social critic. Yet I think that a reader unfamiliar with *Communitas* and *Growing Up Absurd* would be baffled as well as enlightened by this book. Goodman's gnomic and dogmatic style of expression often irritates and I don't believe that this is solely because, as he himself would probably contend, he succeeds in penetrating people's "character armor" and nudging buried repressions. Big truths about human nature and broad moral judgments are asserted along with obviously sensible smaller truths as if our certainty about the latter extended to the former as well. The result is that we often feel deprived somehow of a chance to answer back, to call stop, if only in order to clarify the argument.

But this collection, following his much-discussed earlier books, is clearly aimed at an audience already familiar with and responsive to Goodman. It is a potpourri, including in addition to the social criticism a scattering of essays on avant-garde writing, painting, theology and the psychology of intellectuals and artists. Several of these are exciting and profound—I liked especially the discussion of "speech as action" and "On the Intellectual Inhibition of Grief and Anger." They have little to do, however, with the Utopian criticism promised by the title.

The title is meant to suggest a paradox. Goodman's point is that his "Utopian essays" actually constitute "practical proposals" to solve concrete, acknowledged human problems. The trouble is that "our simple-minded proposals make people feel foolish and timid . . . therefore, paradoxically, the simpler and more easily effected the ideas we suggest—the less 'utopian' they are—the more they are *really* im-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

practical for these people." Thus Goodman describes himself as a pragmatist in the tradition of James and Dewey. He eschews far-reaching visions of a total reconstruction of modern life and his acceptance of the label "utopian" is ironic, pointing to the fear, apathy and cynicism pervading our society which has dried up not merely the "spontaneous imagination of ends" but even the "capacity to invent ingenious expedients." He wants to get things moving again, to break through the attitudes of self-pity and compulsive "putting down" of the system cultivated by so many self-styled "radicals" and "rebels" (he brilliantly dissects the Beats and the hipsters), to stir people to direct action on the community level that undercuts the machinery of national politics and centralized bureaucracy.

"Pragmatic" has become the most popular of all approving adjectives in the vocabulary of American planners, reformers and political innovators. The Kennedy Administration is frequently praised for approaching the nation's problems in a pragmatic spirit. Tinkering with administrative arrangements, "raising the level" of TV by scheduling a few more "serious" panel discussions, getting a civil rights bill through Congress that the Southern Senators feel they "can live with"—all of these are seen as manifestations of a pragmatic outlook and are so justified. Now Goodman means something quite different by pragmatic, almost the opposite in fact. He takes particular human needs—for useful work, sexual fulfillment, space and fresh air—as his point of departure, not, as in the previous examples I cited, the existing set of social arrangements and vested interests. Institutions and activities are judged to be pragmatic if they meet these needs rather than according to their capacity to avoid "rocking the boat" or their "realistic" acceptance of "moderation" and the "lesser evil."

Goodman has better warrant in the James-Dewey tradition for his use of "pragmatic" than those who equate it with political manipulation, although one sometimes wishes that he would give a little more sustained attention to philosophical considerations. His approach raises, however, two related but distinguishable problems. First, what are the nature and source of the human needs which serve as his criteria for evaluating social performance? I have every sympathy with his insistence on the reality of a human nature that is both biological and generically social and with his rejection of much contemporary sociology as insufficiently psychological and excessively prone to put forward an oversocialized view of man. But the nature of human nature is a bit more problematical than Goodman allows. One suspects he is aware of this, a fact that arouses irritation with his occasional pose of being a simple commonsensical fellow, a child exclaiming at the nakedness of emperors, who is calling us back to obvious truths we have all forgotten.

Secondly, there is a tension between the case Goodman makes for his concrete proposals and his awareness of the probable response to them. This tension gives his argument a richness and complexity, a kind of double vision, that enables him to combine inventive imagination with a diagnosis of our plight that cuts beneath the clichés about "organization men" and "mass society" that have by now become so familiar and boring. Ultimately, Goodman's practical proposals are fully meaningful only in the con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

text of a larger view of society, one that is "utopian," if you like, in the traditional and favorable sense. Goodman certainly recognizes this, but is inclined to forget it in his enchantment with the details of his suggested reforms. At the same time, his very understanding of the manifold ways in which insights are domesticated and grand moral-critical traditions blunted leads us to wonder whether actual attempts to carry out some of his proposals might not result in their becoming mere pragmatic expedients in the debased sense he rejects.

For example, in the essay "Pornography and the Sexual Revolution" (the best single thing I've read on the whole subject of sexual censorship) Goodman argues for the removal in contemporary America of all censorship of symbolic representations that "stir sexual desires and thoughts," up to and including what is called "hard-core pornography." With considerable acuteness, he examines the probable consequences of such a decision and draws the teeth from the standard fearful objections, urging, however, that "since the change-over would be so drastic, the court might aim at a deliberate slowness, and the mass media would wisely want to meet and agree on a prudent rate of change." This sounds liberating and enlightened yet "practical" at the same time.

But when Goodman goes on to argue that "the aim is to establish a principled general policy [and] the states and localities could continue to enforce whatever censorship they please, so long as they do not risk a national suit and are content to do without some of the national culture," one begins to doubt whether his proposal would have much effect on present realities. For it is precisely local groups, both private and public, that impose effective censorship today, as the distributors of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *The Tropic of Cancer* have learned to their pain. Goodman justifies giving free rein to local option by invoking the ideal advantages of cultural decentralization. But the trouble is that these advantages *are* ideal rather than established realities in contemporary America. One is reminded of the arguments of self-styled Jeffersonian upholders of states' rights against the encroachments of a federal welfare-state; in principle they make an impressive case, but in practice they ensure a do-nothing policy by vesting final authority in venal, gerrymandered state legislatures that are easily swayed and corrupted by vested interests and narrow pressure groups.

Thus there is a conflict here between the "utopian" – how things

By Mail Order Only

HOMAGE
TO NATALIA
SEDOVA-TROTSKY

By Marguerite Bonnet, Andre Breton, Isaac Deutscher, Pierre Frank, Joseph Hansen, Livio Maitan, Pierre Naville, Laurette Orfila, Michel Raptis, Alfred Rosmer, Laurent Schwartz, Jack Weber, Sara W.

plus

PORTRAIT NOTES
by Leon Trotsky

ASSASSINATION IN COYOACAN
by Natalia Sedova-Trotsky

Order from: Les Lettres Nouvelles
30 Rue de L'Universite
Paris 7, France

Specify, *Homage to Natalia Trotsky*

Price: $2.00

Text in French

124 *pages* + 9 *photos*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ought to be in a better American society – and the "practical" – what we can do now, given the way things are –of Goodman's title. I think that Irving Howe sensed a similar conflict when he expressed concern in the Winter, 1962 issue of DISSENT that Goodman's proposed youth work camps might in practice become semi-military, authoritarian institutions.

However, these objections are secondary in light of Goodman's major purpose: To get people moving, criticizing and planning again in an immediate way, unbefogged by ideological abstractions and considerations of power. Goodman himself hasn't changed much in his long career as a writer, social critic and reformer. Yet one is struck by the congruence between his outlook and the mood of the newly rebellious campus and youth groups of the sixties.

DENNIS H. WRONG

His Brother's Keeper

A RADICAL'S AMERICA, by Harvey Swados. Atlantic–Little, Brown, 1962, xvii + 347 pp. $5.00.

In his introduction to this collection of essays, Harvey Swados writes that he has "attempted to maintain a a tension between skepticism and idealism." The skepticism is, however, informed by compassion, and the idealism enriched by passion. Together, they offer not alone a point of of view, but a moral intervention into what concerns us, or *should* concern us.

It is not so much a matter of political line, or critical agreement, as it is of attitude. In this respect, Swados can be taken as a spokesman for the kind of radicalism which I consider to be mine, which I know to be that of many of my friends, and which I would like to think has adherents in different generations, occupations, and locales.

The topical range of these essays is wide–starting with a consideration of the present relevance of Upton Sinclair's *Jungle,* and ending with "Why Resign from the Human Race?" (which provoked more letters on its appearance in *Esquire* in 1959 than any article in the magazine's history). Between them are considerations of such diverse subjects as "Robinson Crusoe–the Man Alone," "The Myth of the Happy Worker" (another of Swados' essays which, on its appearance in *The Nation* in 1957, provoked wide response). "Exurbia Revisited," "West Coast Waterfront" (debated in the last issue of DISSENT), "Certain Jewish Writers" (he discusses his own identity as a Jew in the Introduction), "The Dilemma of the Educated Woman," and a great deal more.

Much of this is radical journalism at its very best. I'd consider that praise enough if there weren't as well a lot

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more to be said. There aren't many people doing first-class reporting in such areas as "The Miners: Men Without Work." Swados roams far behind the reporter, and, what is more important, adds to his journalism the insights of an artist as well as a socialist. He does not, in short, succumb to "objective" detachment. After all, these are people he is writing about, not ciphers or statistics. He has talked with them, met them, been moved or angered by them. He is, indeed, his "brother's keeper." But he tries also to be his brother's conscience, and critic.

Swados has worked in factories, been a union member, and clearly feels close to the problems of the worker —itself a distinction among present-day writers. In general, the labor pieces (many from DISSENT) are of unique interest in that they reflect a radical conscience made penetrating by literary skill. But if he is not the social scientist distantly, if sympathetically, examining the plight of the common man, neither does he affect a phony intimacy. The fact of the matter is that he is not really a factory worker, but an artist and an intellectual, a novelist, a writer—and *he* knows the difference. Consequently, there is neither pretense nor condescension. Nor is there glibness and contempt; I sort of have a picture of him—based on nothing more than the impression these essays have made on me—resisting the temptation to toss off a tart and nifty phrase because he cares too much about the subject to risk being misunderstood.

Some of the best essays included in this volume, I am pleased to note, first appeared in DISSENT. But readers who think they can forego this book because they've read some of it in DISSENT are missing a rare opportunity to follow an inquiring mind in the consideration of problems common and uncommon. Most of the essays, of course, appeared in other publications. There are, in all, some twenty-five of them; and many are followed by "postscripts" of later reflection.

There is no formal theme to the book. But a theme emerges nevertheless: The dignity of the individual, whether intellectual or ironworker, male or female, can flourish only under conditions of freedom and mutual concern and respect. There is indeed, an inspiring quality about the essays, which makes the response of hundreds of young people to the one in *Esquire* altogether plausible. (It has been suggested that the idea for the Peace Corps originated in this article.) And while they have in every way the ring of our time, and our contemporary pressures, they bring to mind certain classic appeals of socialism. (For example, Eugene V. Debs saying that he could not be free so long as one man was enslaved.) In effect, Swados has used his sophistication to illuminate a variety of issues rather than corrode his convictions—and this is, perhaps, what gives the book its special attractiveness.

EMANUEL GELTMAN

COMING IN DISSENT:

THE NEW PEACE MOVEMENT

by Roy Finch

A two-part study of this important Development by a leading American pacifist.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Skeletons in the Affluent Closet

THE OTHER AMERICA, by Michael Harrington. Macmillan, 1962. 191 pages. $4.00.

WEALTH AND POWER IN AMERICA, by Gabriel Kolko. Frederick A. Praeger, 1962. 178 pages. $4.85.

Those who have been preoccupied by the marvels of American affluence often forget that beneath it all is a heavy layer of extraordinary poverty. The poor in this country suffer from no temporary aberration of the economic system, but are subjected rather to a persistent and degrading suppression of their living standards and whatever humanity they had once possessed. There are perhaps fifty million of them, more than a fourth of the population in the richest, most powerful nation in the world.

This is the well-sustained thesis of Michael Harrington's passionate and angry book. America's poor, says Harrington, are the strangest in history—they are invisible. The average traveler on speedy turnpikes does not see the rundown company town where permanently unemployed loiter on street corners and in bars. Suburbanites at shopping centers no longer glimpse the poverty of downtown. And the poor have no one to speak for them. They seldom vote; they have no political voice. They are out of sight and out of mind.

Harrington has done well to remind us that affluence is not total. More important, he has revealed a hidden subculture of American society—one in which there is a set of values that statistics cannot possibly describe. It is a culture that perpetuates itself in endless desperation. With the welfare state beyond reach, these people are lonely, insecure, fatalistic, without pleasure.

Not content with a mere reading of government reports, Harrington sought out the poor. He wanted to know them as people. He visited the flea-bitten agencies that supply dishwashers to restaurants; he talked with workers cast adrift by automated industry; he assisted the Catholic Workers group in their remarkable mission on the Bowery; he served as a social worker in St. Louis. He came to know poverty as few "outsiders" know it today.

The poor, says Harrington, comprise the unseen work force of the city. They are the restaurant workers, the hospital employees, clerks in small shops, janitors, menial jobholders. Unprotected by most social legislation, they are unskilled and untrained, and more often than not are brutalized by unscrupulous employers and racketeer unions. They are displaced mine workers made idle forever by John L. Lewis' desperate and secret deals with the coal operators. They are migrant farm workers, "hill-billies" hidden by the pleasant foliage of the Appalachians and the summer resorts of the Catskills. They are small farmers, the last of the yeomanry. They are Negroes, long-time habitants of our culture of poverty, usually at work, if at all, in the lowest and poorest paying jobs. And they are the aged, of whom there are now more than ever

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before. (Harrington also includes the intellectual poor—the beats and the Bohemians, who are not always remittance men and who also suffer from hunger.)

Consider the aged. We delude ourselves that social security now makes life pleasant for them; we ignore the simple statistic that average benefits are about $70 a month, or under $900 a year. Harrington underscores the fact that 60 per cent have incomes which are 20 per cent less than what is required to live in the cheapest city of the nation. How right he is when he says that we merely tolerate old people and store them away in institutions to await death.

Why does poverty persist in so prosperous a nation? The answer is not hard to find: among other things, fundamental structural changes in the economy imposed by automation have created hard pockets of unemployment. Meanwhile, the vaunted economic stabilizers introduced by the New Deal are beginning to fail: even since 1954 the number of workers exhausting their unemployment insurance has been on the increase. Further, minimum wage legislation protects those who don't need it: the recent extension to retailing, for example, affected only one-twelfth of almost 3 million workers in "covered" employment. And persistent prejudice denies proper education. proper housing and proper jobs to those of black skin.

This is the face of poverty in America. Of course, much more is discussed here—the farce of public housing, juvenile delinquency, mental illness and the utter lack of any political forum in which the poor might speak their piece. Harrington has written a remarkable book, angry enough at times to border on the savage, but one that is to be read and trusted for its fundamental truths.

Gabriel Kolko's short study of income and wealth ought to be a good complement to Harrington's book, for it is so thoroughly saturated with statistics. Unfortunately, it doesn't come off as well as might be expected. All the indignation gets lost in a welter of data, good, bad and indifferent. For one thing, Kolko writes as if he were the first to have discovered the existence of income maldistribution, wealth concentration, economic power and poverty. Then, more often than not, the odd twists and interpretations given to the statistical material tend to become self-defeating.

What is the point, one may ask, of insisting that there has been no change in the distribution of personal income since 1910 when the very data employed show a 15 per cent drop in the share received by the highest tenth? Moreover, there is no denying the palpable fact that the major benefits of income changes, such as they are, have gone to middle-income groups. That is to say, there has been some shift in income distribution. But no matter how we look at the numbers, the poor have not been eliminated simply because the standard for dividing poverty from relative well-being has been altered. Not too long ago, the poor were found in those families with incomes under $2000 a year; today, the line of separation is closer to $4000, or perhaps more. Kolko would have done better to pay attention to those shifting standards rather than adopting a virtually absolutist position in his statistical analysis, for an important argument is thereby weakened.

Otherwise, there is little to complain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about: income distribution data *are* distorted by the expense account economy; taxation still remains largely regressive and more burdensome for low-income groups; and wealth is just as lopsidedly distributed as income. All this Kolko develops in satisfactory fashion. There are some minor differences between him and Harrington: he prefers a $3000 income cutoff to define poverty; the latter's is slightly more (Leon Keyserling goes even higher—to $4000!). And it is good to see that Kolko has dropped second-hand-car registrations as a measure of low consumption, an argument he offered in an early DISSENT article.

Perhaps the major flaw in the overall analysis stems from the refusal to acknowledge the decline of owner-domination in American industry. Here Kolko seeks to rebut the famous Berle-Means thesis; he insists, rather, that ownership and control are still identical. However, this conclusion, after all his research, has the character of a non-sequitur, particularly when he concludes that those who do control our major corporations own at most one-fifth of outstanding shares. Thus, dispersion of stock ownership is a fact, and attention, it would seem, must be focused on techniques of control. It is at this point that the sociology and economics of the corporation meet.

At any rate, both of these books are welcome antidotes to the euphoria of recent years. As Harrington so well puts it, there *is* another America, and it is high time we took a close look at it.

BEN B. SELIGMAN

Politics and the Rule of Law

POLITICAL JUSTICE. THE USE OF LEGAL PROCEDURE FOR POLITICAL ENDS, by Otto Kirchheimer. Princeton University Press, 1961, 452 pp. $8.50.

At the outset, Dr. Kirchheimer explains that his title refers not to "the search for an ideal order" but to "the most dubious segment of the administration of justice"—that whose function it is to "eliminate a regime's political foe according to some prearranged rules."

No wonder that to a man the legal profession—including some highly respected liberals such as Justice Douglas—has condemned the book, rejecting its basic contentions and attacking its scholarship. In a country much given to a positivistic approach which holds that "the law is what the judges say," it is still not considered proper to write, as the author does, that the judges say what helps to make the political regime workable. In an age that has allowed Freud to enlighten us on the earthy nature of our most sublime dreams, the administrators of justice still abhor the suggestion that Justice is anything but a flowingly clad virgin blindly weighing right and wrong in an ideal balance.

Had Kirchheimer confined himself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the charge that occasionally Justice peeks out from under her blindfold, they might have agreed. Had he merely accused the justices at times of perverting the absolute ideal of Justice, they might have applauded his elaborate marshalling of the evidence. But this is not his concern, or only incidentally. His attack is directed against the very notion of abstract justice, the ideology by which the justices live and which sustains the confidence of citizens in the society in which they live. For a regime breaks down when people no longer identify the laws (and their administration) with such an ideal yardstick. The illusion of a "just" law, in turn causes people to bear even a severe, unjust regime. Hence the lawyers reacted to this book as though they had been stung, or simply refused to understand what the author tries to say.

It is not quite as easy to see why liberals, too, felt challenged by Kirchheimer's contention. Offhand, they should welcome a proof that the poor man or the non-conformist is always hung. But Kirchheimer has cut off the source of their indignation: by denying any absolute standard of justice, he deprived them of precisely the ideal which they accuse the establishment of perverting. Take the Dreyfus case, which still, besides the Zenger and the Sacco and Vanzetti cases, is the liberal's grand exhibit. A man was denied justice for political reasons, and not just everyman but the French courts, too, agreed what kind of wrong had been done him. Zola was condemned, then vindicated. Clemenceau led the just cause to triumph through a political trial. In this case the courts which ought to have defended the establishment, in fact were used for its discomfiture. Worse befell in the Sacco-Vanzetti case: an innocent man was condemned to die, and ever since, each death sentence by an American court threatens to become an international political scandal. But surprisingly, Kirchheimer does not deal with these cases, because in his view a martyr cannot be innocent, as Sacco and Vanzetti were.

This makes it very clear where the author parts company with the liberals. It is easy to rise in defense of an innocent man, and to rise the liberals need to believe their heroes not only innocent but on the side of the angels. But a radical, like Kirchheimer, will defend his hero precisely where he is guilty in terms established by the regime.

At this point, however, a strange circle closes, and by the author's admission it is a vicious one, from which he escapes only through prayer — not a very convincing proof of a radical attitude. For his approach does not permit us to distinguish between a rebel who suffers injustice for the sake of a majority and of democracy—say, Kenyatta—and one who tries to subvert or suppress majority rule. With his attitude Kirchheimer manages to remain objective and serene in describing, one after the other, the measures West Germany takes against communists and East Germany against the majority of its subjects. This position probably is hard rationality by academic standards, but is it as radical politically as the author wishes to be? There must be a difference between arbitrary government defending itself against democracy and democracy defending itself against usurpers; between, for example, Agartz, a West German labor economist, who posed as a bona fide trade union official but actually received subsidies from Ulbricht—and a person who tries to maintain contact with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Protestant Church behind the Iron Curtain.

The comparison may well show the cause of this reviewer's misgivings. Agartz chose to be an undercover agent in an open society, rejecting its privileges of free speech and personal security. Kirchheimer admits elsewhere that an open, democratic society is helpless where a true majority movement tries to change the regime; but it obviously is entitled to apply to a conspirator the same harsh law of repression that he threatens to use in case of success. Had he wished merely to propagate his convictions, Agartz would not have had to violate any law. His Protestant counterpart cannot act —even if it were only to tell his friends that they must obey Ulbricht's laws— without violating the law. He therefore claims to speak in the name of Justice, and he probably would not act unless he believed this.

The concept of Justice hence is more than an ideology, and people who think they know "what is just" are not the victims of "a necessary delusion in an antagonistic society." People who fight for "Justice" know exactly what they mean, and they measure the justice of their regime by standards derived from ideas which have a content. Justice itself is a content to be fought for. In denying this, Kirchheimer has deliberately muffled the impact of an otherwise moving presentation. The harsh realities which, in the framework of his theory, stand out even more harshly, cannot fail to arouse the citizens to defend that justice which he says does not exist. And, remembering the dedication "to the past, present and future victims of political justice," we must suspect that while Dr. Kirchheimer's scholarly mind is debunking the academic ideology of "justice," his heart believes in the reality of injustice.

But Dr. Kirchheimer has forbidden himself to wax indignant. The literature which exists is either so highly principled that it never comes down to the consideration of specific issues, or so narrowly operational that it remains unaware of any issues. Kirchheimer has done something which to our knowledge has never been tried before. He has placed the operations of political justice into a precise sociological context and he has reduced the abstract principles to concrete political meanings. He reveals the conflict between the abstract principles which any code of law of necessity must pretend to follow, and the individual value system of this judge, that defendant or the present author. Since this conflict is inherent in any judicial system, the book uncovers the sources of genuine tragedy, particularly in the moving passages where the author discusses the role of the judge.

Place this book by the side of Godwin and Thoreau.

HENRY PACHTER

MOONSTRUCK

"Dr. Edward Teller told Congress today that the United States must, for its own security, gain control of the moon. . . .

"He said the country that establishes a working base there could control near-by space, and would be able to 'know what was going on everywhere on earth.'

"'We need the moon for our own safety,' he told a House Science and Astronautical subcommittee." — From the N. Y. *Times*, March 28.

YEAH, DO THAT

"BATAVIA, N. Y.—(UPI)—Larry H. Merrit, a trucker of Batavia, urged his friends recently to follow his example and build fallout shelters 'so when I come up after it's over, I can have a drink of beer with my friends.'"—N. Y. *Times*, Nov. 16.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How to Succeed in Bilking, etc. . . .

THE GENTLEMEN CONSPIRATORS, by John G. Fuller. Grove Press, Inc. $3.95.

In one of his lively discourses on contemporary socioeconomic trends, Professor James Riddle Hoffa, summa cum laude, of the Graduate School of Hard Knocks, declared in 1961 that, "the zillion dollar corporations are taking over in this country. Poor son of a bitch steals a loaf of bread, gets two years in jail working on the sand pile; you steal a couple of hundred millions like those characters in the electrical industry, and you get thirty days. And they never would have gone to jail at all except the judge was vindictive and wanted to pretend everybody got treated alike."

The story of the price fixers in the electrical industry written by John G. Fuller puts things in better focus than the remarks of Hoffa. In fact, this succinct summary of the scandal in the electrical industry proves that Hoffa was wrong.

The responsible heads of Westinghouse and General Electric were never found guilty: They were never indicted. The amount of money involved was much larger then Hoffa said: rigging prices on $7 billions of sales. The Judge was not vindictive: seven lesser executives were fined and did spend less than 30 days in jail, but this was surely a kindly act. After all, the Attorney General of the United States, Robert Kennedy, had said that "I regard the price fixing of the electrical industry as a major threat to democracy." Suppose these subversive elements operating in the electrical industry had been indicted under the Smith Act. How long would they have stayed in jail? After all, the electrical industry executives were guilty of overt acts.

And it was a real conspiracy. Mr. Fuller does a good job of specifying the acts in this conspiracy: false names, clandestine meetings, Aesopian language for communication, collusive bidding, deliberate violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law.

This story begins with a newspaperman's investigation on why bids on electrical equipment to TVA were identical, and had been for seven years. It ends with a vote of confidence to Ralph Cordiner, chairman of the Board of General Electric, at a stockholders annual meeting in 1961. In between is one of those rare revelations of the underworld of business as it operates in real life.

In hearings in 1959 on price increases Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming summarized the status of big business this way: the eight largest steel companies did 70 per cent of the business. The eight largest petroleum companies hold 56 per cent of that industry. The eight largest tin can and tinware manufacturers monopolized 88 per cent of that business. The eight largest tire manufacturers controlled 91 per cent of the business.

A obvious question faced the Senate hearing. Should anyone worry? Aren't these companies in competition? An important witness was Cordiner of GE. "It is assumed that companies in in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dustries affected by this bill have the ability to 'administer' [meaning rig] prices in a manner not responsive to market supply and demand. If so, the assumption is false because these companies are just as much subject to competitive market conditions as any other."

Fuller makes this point: "Exactly six months before this date in May 1959, when Cordiner was speaking so rapturously about GE pricing policies, seven of his highest executives were meeting with their competitors in the Hotel Traymore at Atlantic City, N.J. to see to it that a high cost item ($125 million annually) known as the switchgear assembly would be jacked up in price, and that sealed government bids would be sliced up and given on a platter to each of the conspiring companies in this ratio: GE, 42 per cent of the market; Westinghouse, 38 per cent; Allis Chalmers, 11 per cent; I.T.E. 9 per cent." And what Senator is there who would suggest that perjury may have been involved in Cordiner's testimony?

The gap between the real world of business and the economics of the classroom may be judged by contrasting pages 136–37 of Fuller's book with Paul Samuelson's chapter on determination of price by supply and demand in his text on economics. Or by remembering that in the steel industry the theory of price is this: "Price is competitive when we are able to give the customer a choice between two sources of supply at the same price." (Statement by Roger Blough, chairman of the Board of United States Steel corporation.)

One industrialist, Henry Ford II, a member of the board of directors of GE, urged a moral reform of business. "World Communism could not ask for a better gift," he said, in referring to the impact of these revelations. But he did not begin a fight to eliminate either Cordiner or the president of GE who were responsible for the company's operations in these years. Ford, after all, has had its days in court too.

There is a moral to the story of the electrical industry. Any bright eager-beaver in the school of business administration can learn it quickly. Never settle for being just a vice president, or manager; get to the top or else you may become a scapegoat. And that is disgraceful. At least temporarily.

B. J. Widick

How Wilful Is Wayward?

The Press, by A. J. Liebling. Ballantine Books, 1961. $.95.

From his "Wayward Press" articles in the New Yorker, A. J. Liebling has put together a damning book. But it will hardly surprise his readers who, after all, also read the newspapers, even if with less professional involvement. Nor will it provoke the publishers—America's House of Lords, Harold Ickes once called them—either to self-appraisal or a mending of their ways. Since the decline of the press has been paralleled by a decline of press criticism, the publishers are not likely to be driven to anguish by one lone voice.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

More likely, Liebling will be accorded those faint praises the Establishment wisely accords its antagonists.

Only recently has the press felt itself so secure that it would not label the enemies of its privilege as foes of freedom or Communists. Fifteen years ago Robert Hutchins' Commission on Freedom of the Press, ironically a child of Henry Luce's beneficence, was urging that the legal liberties of the press should stand unaltered only as its clearly defined moral and social duties were performed. And at the same time, a committee of the U. S. Senate, in the "do-nothing" 80th Congress, was studying the conditions for the "Survival of a Free, Competitive Press," with implicit and explicit conclusions about government initiatives somewhat like those of the Hutchins' unit.

Liebling is aware of how far we have come since official and semi-official scrutiny of the press was a respectable enterprise. Indeed, as he points out, were an agency of the U.S. government simply to express concern, as the British Royal Commissions of Inquiry of 1949 and 1961 did in a far less monopolistic situation, that recent developments "lead inevitably toward concentration of ownership and a reduction in . . . the number and variety of voices speaking to the public through the press" it would be accused of some infamous heresy. Yet that, as Liebling fully documents, is precisely what is happening in this country.

In truth, we could no more conceive of such an utterance from our government than from Franco's or Khrushchev's. The one major pronouncement by President Kennedy dealing with the press asked for a measure of self-censorship at the very moment, immediately upon the abortive Cuban invasion, when the most reasonable plaint would have been that the press had already so censored itself that it had almost totally surrendered its obligation to provide information. The President thus endorsed that view of the relationship of newspapers to the national interest which envisions the continued narrowing of the boundaries of public discussion. When the history of American-Cuban relations is written, the irresponsibility and deceptiveness of our newspapers, by sins of omission and commission, may appear no less ignominious than the Hearst empire's preceding the war with Spain.

Our newspapers distort, deliberately —even the best of them. And Mr. Liebling has marshalled impressive evidence of their sorry records on such representative matters as the Hiss case and Senator McCarthy, developments within Soviet Russia and domestic election campaigns, welfare fund "scandals" and trade union strikes. But he has at the same time dispelled the notion that this is the publishing world's indemnity to the advertisers. They distort because their economic motivations and partisan affiliations are what they are; their mentality is the very same as that of corporate business, and they share the same moral and intellectual universe, financial interests and social blindness.

Understanding this as well as he does, Liebling seems unduly exercised over the short shrift meted out to the Democratic Party. For surely Kennedy has been given a better press than any of his recent Democratic predecessors. And even if there were a press fair in its treatment of Democrats, would it be any more open to points of view on war and peace, on the content of our life and culture, that lie outside the immediate consensus which the press itself has so carefully shaped?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Liebling, alas, admits to abandoning himself to hope, which is not at all the same thing as indicating any solutions to the problems he poses. It is hardly to be expected that one of his older, and not entirely unserious, suggestions, a school for publishers, will be taken up. But there is much more that needs to be said. If it is true that direct government control of the press is not desirable, the government can surely enforce legislation against monopolies in the "opinion industries" and create congenial conditions for new enterprises in them, as it is prone to do in other and less vital areas.

Even today, when government activity is so unlikely, there are unexplored alternatives. Might not a trade union with some vision, or a group of them, a foundation or a cooperative, turn its energies to the unmet tasks of the press? For such groups several million dollars is no longer an insurmountable obstacle, and they might find a surprisingly large, hitherto discontented readership, grateful to any paper that would, for example, add to the canned coverage of the wire services, the valuable and otherwise unavailable news now carried by London's *Sunday Observer* and *Economist*.

Most important, however, new entrants into the field of publishing from sources such as these could alone provide the counter-cultures of value and thought without which the nation is destined to have its critical sense atrophied and the effective possibilities of discussion damned up. Mr. Liebling has only glimpsed the wider implications of his critique, but despite his forced humor and slick posture, he compels us at least to turn our attention to one of this country's most servious and least discussed problems.

MARTIN PERETZ

Shaping India's Future

BLOSSOMS IN THE DUST, by Kusum Nair. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1961, 201 pages. 21 shillings.

In Western countries, the phrase, "revolution of rising expectations" has suddenly become very popular in regard to newly emerging countries in Africa and Asia. It is good that people who are eager to help be aware of the needs of these nations. But there is a danger that those who desire to assume the responsibility of giving life and reality to the so-called revolutionary "expectations" may overlook or simplify certain problems. In their zeal they may not consider the fact that this "revolution" may be limited to a few intellectuals and leaders.

The danger is certainly strong in regard to India. The ethnic and social diversity of the country makes it almost certain that development projects useful in one region will be undesirable in the others. Even within a single region, the people's attitude to work and life,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

influenced by tradition, culture and religion, can make the fulfillment of the schemes difficult.

Aware of this problem, thoughtful Indian writers have been trying to probe into the minds of the people so as to bring their ideas and attitudes to the leaders and planners. Kusum Nair's *The Blossom in the Dust* is an important effort in this direction.

The book reveals a simple but startling fact, that in India the most penetrating and far-reaching development projects have left almost no impact upon the individuals and communities involved. In some remote villages, the new citizens of India haven't even heard of the 5-year plans, or of the gigantic power installation schemes. In several cases, those who naturally live where the dams are under construction, are totally unconcerned with the whole scheme. To them, primarily, it is a whim of the government; and they are ready to tolerate its fancies.

On the other hand, there are those, who although familiar with the new projects, such as the irrigation system, are not inclined to use them. In such places, the authorities are finding it very difficult to persuade the people to take advantage of the development schemes.

"In the village of Budelpali," says Kusum Nair, "the local extension officer had to go on hunger strike—he lay down in the village temple and refused to take any food—before he could persuade the peasantry to sow for a second irrigated winter crop of paddy."

Such events present a dramatic account of the attitudes and philosophies of the villagers. Here, each citizen is an actor in the drama of new developments, and yet at the same time, he is also a living image in a shadow-play involving centuries-old ideals, patterns and viewpoints.

To collect the material for this book, the author spent a year walking around in the villages, from extreme North to the far South. In each State, she chose three or four, sometimes more districts (the basic unit of civil administration); and in each district she chose a number of villages, taking into account such factors as the physical situation of the unit selected, and size and composition of population.

"In most cases," Mrs. Nair says, "I went into a village without any previous intimation, introduced myself and explained the purpose of my visit, and then settled down to a long talk in groups or singly. I had no set questionnaire. I would allow the conversation to develop naturally, giving it only a minimum of direction to keep it more or less on the subject of the dominant development project or problem of the locality."

This approach has produced excellent results. More absorbing than fiction, this verbatim record presents a picture of the mind of the unpretentious villager in his own words. "In Bhoola, a Bhil village in Sirohi district, the villagers admit: 'Yes, we have heard of the Congress. We have heard of the Congress; yes. Everyone talks of it.'

" 'But,' pauses Kania, gravely puckering his bushy eyebrows, 'but now that you mention it, we do not know whether Congress is a man or woman.'"

But this is only one side of the picture. Mrs. Nair does not omit the stories of those enterprising villagers who form a majority of the Indian agricultural society. "There is Pritaram, for instance," she says, "in a small village near Phillaur. He is a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refugee from Lyallpur district. His father was an illiterate landless agricultural laborer, but 'we were so hard up after partition that I decided to go away to England.' He says it casually, as if England were next door, or at least nearer than Delhi."

There are the stories of other men like Pritaram, who now own factories in which laborers who never had any proper training are engaged in self-taught skilled labor, and who plan to send their children for higher studies to England or the United States.

This clear and convincing narrative is exciting reading all the way, and is valuable both for Indian and Western leaders and scholars. It points out some of the problems inherent in a democratic society, and reminds us that in any development scheme the human element is the most important. No project, however precise and rational it may be, can succeed if the people are not ready to accept it. Therefore, the task of responsible people is not only to initiate social and economic "revolution" by democratic means, but is also to educate and motivate the people to improve their lot as individuals and as a society.

On the last page, the author has an important sentence: "I can clearly assert that the experience of my travels and contacts with the village communities has not given me any sense of pessimism or defeatism." After reading this book, I think, any reader will feel convinced that this story of an "Unfinished Revolution" is composed of the tears, problems, and laughter of young men and women; of "blossoms in the dust," who remain undefeated by the poverty surrounding them, and are confident that out of a broken past they can carve out a new future.

SOMA VIRA

LETTERS

A Protest and Reply

Editors:

The Congress for Cultural Freedom protests an implication in Paul Goodman's interesting article, "The Devolution of Democracy."

It denies the implication of being anybody's "instrument." Its activities (and publications) are the result of precisely the kind of free exchange of ideas and free decisions by small groups, "experimental, self-improving units," which Mr. Goodman admires.

NICOLAS NABOKOV,
Secretary-General

PAUL GOODMAN *replies:*

I am surprised at Mr. Nabokov's letter. In my sentence on the CIA, I spoke in capital-letter generalities about Cultural Freedom and the Encounter of ideas, because I could not be more particular without embarrassing friends of the Farfield Foundation, etc. Since Mr. Nabokov brings it up, however, I think it would be a service to the intellectual community if the Congress would describe the financing of its many activities, publications, conferences, travel, etc., over the many years.

Of course, nothing would logically follow from such an accounting. One cannot judge the truth of propositions by their underwriting. Yet we may assume that an underwriter, also has his purposes. For instance, *Esquire* magazine has used me as an "instrument," a kind of jester to manufacture conversation-pieces, while I was nevertheless expressing my "free" ideas and decisions and hoping that a few of the many hundred thousand readers would take them seriously. But in such a case it is clear to the readers that the ads sustain the magazine, for they are in bright colors. In the case of Congress—and in this I agree with Dwight Macdonald, who worked a spell for *Encounter*—a frank public statement of financing by Mr. Nabokov would enable the intellectual world similarly to size up the situation for itself. Perhaps he will write DISSENT another letter to this effect.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Food for China

Editors:

I read with interest your plea to feed the starving Red Chinese masses. Although I concur, for apolitical humanitarian reasons, there are people who will see the aid as shoring up this oppressive regime. It is easy to find comments such as these:

". . . the famine is the direct consequence of a particular social order; so long as this order exists, such famines are inevitable. . . .

"Being in this sense inevitable, the famine today performs a progressive function. . . . The famine threatens to create serious disturbances and possibly the destruction of the entire order. Therefore the efforts of the well-to-do to mitigate the effect of the famine are quite natural. . . . Psychologically this talk of feeding the starving, etc., is nothing but the expression of the usual sugary sentimentality so characteristic of the intelligentsia."

These particular remarks, as you may possibly have guessed from the language, are attributable to Lenin and are to be found in a study by David Dallin, "The Soviet Union, From Lenin to Khrushchev" (p. 17) made, interestingly enough, for the House Un-American Activities Committee. Following this advice, it would be best to allow the Chinese Marxist-Leninists to eat their gospel (the elite, however, never starves along with their charges; they only have sympathy pains) but, fortunately, there is always the sentimentalist intelligentsia to think otherwise, if only to avoid Leninist realpolitik.

Hopefully, this aid will actually be passed on to the starving people and not turned to profit for the party's coffers. In any case the effort will be a commendable gesture.

GENE CHAVKIN

Editors:

I'm distressed at finding your superb issue [Winter 1962] marred by a stupid editorial advocating "help" for Red China in the form of huge shipments of food. I'm sure that the author of this editorial realizes that the present famine in China is not a temporary accident due to backward methods of agriculture, but is simply the result of too many people relative to the amount of arable land, and that given the regime's abandonment of population control policy several years ago, this situation can only grow worse as time goes on. Therefore, the only result of shipping in food from the outside would be to worsen the demographic situation by keeping alive more malnourished people for next year's famine.

Would the author please explain the merits of a policy leading to a larger and more underfed China?

RICHARD SCHWARTZ, M.D.

In reply:

Dr. Schwartz convinces me; his logic is impeccable. Let the population of China be reduced to the point where it has the correct amount of people ". . . relative to the amount of arable land." Would that be about—say—75 million fewer, Doctor?

S. P.

Another Perspective on Goa

Editors:

I have usually found myself in agreement with the spirit, if not always with the conclusions, of Stanley Plastrik's observations on Asian affairs; and Asoka Mehta is certainly one of the world's distinguished socialists. Yet, in their exchange on Goa, one indispensable point was conspicuously missing in the arguments of each. This concerns the role of Portugal in Africa, that is, in Angola and Mozambique. Obviously, classic colonialism is being obliterated in Africa, and Portugal, which has been a notorious offender, is now being pushed out—bloody, tragic inch by inch. It is hardly necessary to discuss the situation in Angola, where the genocide of educated Africans has been under way for some time. Moreover, as is well known, the labor policy of Portugal, both in Angola and Mozambique—in the latter territory tied in with the wholesale shipment of workers to the mines of South Africa—has probably been the most calloused of any colonial power in modern history.

It seems clear that if India had tolerated a Portuguese enclave on her coast—at precisely the moment in history when Portugal's African policy was finally being exposed to public view after years of arrogant obfuscation, the new Africans could hardly have maintained their respect and comradeship with ex-colonial

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

India. This could have meant a further fracturing of those neutralist Afro-Asian peoples who will, if they possibly can, retain political integrity, and may yet save us from world war, in the face of ideological assaults from the dominant power blocs. India's minor military move on Goa had, then, the major political function and the effect of validating the position of neutralist leadership which it is essential to all of us that she maintain. I was surprised that Asoka Mehta did not bother to make this point, since it seems a patent cause for his country's behavior; instead he chose to emphasize the particularistic history of Goan-India negotiations and, moreover, he reaffirmed the friendship of his country, not only with the Portuguese people, which is necessary and commendable, but with their *government,* which is neither.

On the other hand, Plastrik emphasized India's juridical position, and also internal political pressures—which surely existed but were directly revelant to India's need to maintain a viable balance of forces within the country itself. I take it that the allusion was, in significant part, to Krishna Menon, but whether we like Menon or not, the fact is that he represents the left pillar of Indian neutralism —and if that crumbles, a radical, or reactionary, totalitarian wave is likely to inundate the country, or provincial separatism may prevail—in any case, there will be no significant third force remaining in the world, no rallying point for the younger nations.

It is hardly proper or possible, in so brief a communication, to question Plastrik's apparent linking of the Goan action with the problem of Kashmir and the looming presence of China on India's borders. But these are not issues of the same order or dimension; they cannot be reduced to a single principle of morality; they must be seen in their specific historic contexts—always bearing in mind that the only overriding moral concern is to build barriers against nuclear war. The Goan action, by strengthening India's neutralist position internally and externally, particularly in the view of emergent Africa, accomplished precisely that, and did it with dispatch, and though the word has been dirtied in our day, with justice.

STANLEY DIAMOND

Who's "Mad"?

Editors:

It must take a lot of class to be able to "see through" *Mad* magazine as T. J. Ross did (Autumn 1961, DISSENT). DISSENT might profitably retain Ross to write scintillating indictments of such pastimes as rock and roll, baseball, sex and hot dogs, which are well known for their invidious capacity for popular enjoyment.

Mad is valuable precisely because it laughs at itself, and makes people laugh at themselves and their own institutions. It makes no claim to ideology, nor to be a *counterposition* to official values. It merely claims to tickle the funnybone by exposure to social realities, and that it does in large numbers, excepting such savants as the knowing Mr. Ross, who seems to instinctively shy away from things popular.

It is quite something that Ross of all people, should accuse *Mad* of "once-over-snottily" commentary, but the instance he selects (*Mad*'s advice to nations to adopt Madison Avenue techniques—"Red Star Insurance," etc.), is enough to justify *Mad*'s existence. Ross is correct: *Mad* does not *resist* per se, it does not engage in "intellectual skirmishing" but does criticize, and sharply so, the fickleness of modern political principle, the fraud of social persuasion and family ideals in our world.

Every example cited by Ross: the reshaping of the German-Japanese personality in the Hollywood set; the tweedle dum-tweedle dee satire on Kennedy-Nixon; the "How We Retired at the Age 11" bit; the characterization of marriage and children—all emphasize a reproach to ersatz culture. *Mad*'s humor per se is not subtle and not to be ranked with Shaw and Wilde. It is, however, funny!

Ross scorns the defeatism of Alfred E. Neuman, he chides *Mad* for failing to at least adopt beat (fortunately *Mad* does not employ Ross for advice). Ross may think he knows all the political answers. Some of the rest of us do too. But *Mad* does not make that its claim to fame. It knows that a lot of what we feed upon is garbage and tells us so, giving us a chuckle, something to think about, but not the answer. There is a grave need for a serious and ideological political literature which does know some of the an-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

swers. There is also a serious need for *Mad*, which shows us up for what we are. Perhaps Mr. Ross could attain distinction by writing a piece on why we should *not* love our mothers. MICHAEL SHUTE

T. J. Ross *replies:*

No, I don't like our national bore, baseball: it is a pity that youngsters are now so vulnerable to the influence of this mind-reducing activity too: it is a pity that—for fear of losing their standing as super-patriots—they dare not say they'd as soon leave baseball alone. And rock and roll and hot dogs and cheering crowds and those varieties of sex experience which Mr. Shute would lump together with baseball as popular "pastimes" of the sort which might be described as "invidious." Yes, they might. Compulsive notions about the baseball pseudo-orgy, or about the "popular," in general, can be invidious and are therefore worth examining. If the prose describing such matters is scintillating enough to make for clear reading, so much the better.

I had described how a *Mad* take-off on baseball, or drive-in sex, etc., would be so unspontaneous and cagey in funnying-up the material as to blur any of that quality—"class" if you will—that you sense at once at any level of entertainment (or art) when its play is relatively free. It is puzzling that remarks about free expression or about mind or about the qualities of art should be resented as unfair ideology. Yet without the free play of wit and implication one's enjoyments are bound to be awfully diminished. Compare, for example, anything by Offenbach to coy mush like *Guys and Dolls*, etc. Or compare Ichikawa's movies to Preminger's, etc. One makes distinctions, and one doesn't automatically suppose that any entertainment for—or forms of address to—a broad audience must be lacking in "class."

I'm glad Shute agrees with me that my samplings from *Mad* showed it in its sharpest light; and he agrees that the light offers all glare and no vision for its beams shine nowhere except back on the reader—shine through him, in fact. What a funny way of seeing any "realities" along one's path—including a sense of oneself in relation to them.

The view that so long as it's "fun-nee" it's somehow sacrosanct—above or beneath criticism—is typical of the current cult of comicality. Comedy—in which a lively demand on the world is always implicit—is one thing; the glum ritualizing of resentments, something else.

In crying that "*Mad* shows us up for what we are" Shute introduces a regrettable note of self-hatred which, I trust is not warranted. But since he was inspired to mention a couple of real writers, may I point out that a chief impulse of the best modern writing has been to remind the reader of the reality of his own nature. Which is not the same as "showing up" the obvious, or "seeing through" or smiling through, or blinking into a glare. A bit of self-awareness is especially valuable when one lives in a culture so much of which may be characterized as emotionally retarded. Through more awareness Shute may figure for himself what attitude, if any, he wants to take with his Mom. Staring overlong in his *Mad* mirror won't add to anything but his spleen.

y Gasset, Not Unamuno

Editors:

This is just a pedantic point, but since it concerns what is probably the most penetrating essay written in our time, I am moved to make it. In Henry Pachter's review of Erich Fromm's book on Marx, he (Pachter) credits Unamuno with the authorship of "Um einen Goethe von innen bittend." Actually, Ortega y Gasset is the author and the piece first appeared in German, in 1932, in *Die Neue Rundschau*, and, in English, in the *Partisan Review*, in December 1949. It was most recently published as "In Search of Goethe from Within" (*The Dehumanization of Art*, etc., Doubleday Anchor Books, no date).

STANLEY DIAMOND

[Stanley Diamond is correct.—H. P.]

VOICES OF DISSENT

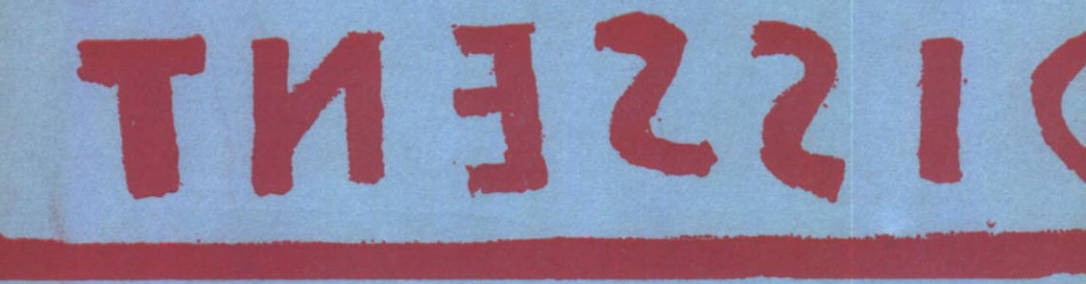
A collection of articles from the first five years of DISSENT; rapidly going out of print; now available at the price of:

$1.50 paperback (originally $1.95); $2.75 hard cover (originally $3.95)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISSENT FIRSTS!

Over the years DISSENT *has published a number of articles which have aroused special attention and controversy. These articles are frequently difficult to obtain, particularly by new* DISSENT *readers. To make it easier to get them, we are offering the following back issues containing these articles as listed at a special rate, either individually or together in a package:*



Ignazio Silone, "Reflections on the Welfare State" (Spring, 1961)
Edwin M. Schur, "The Addict and the Law" (Winter, 1961)
Herber Hill, "Migratory Farm Labor in the U.S." (Summer, 1960)
Irving Howe, Dwight Macdonald, etc., "A Symposium on Television" (Summer, 1960)
"On Socialist Realism," A Major Document from Russia (Winter, 1960)
Fritz Sternberg, "The Second Industrial Revolution" (Spring, 1959)
Dwight Macdonald, "America! America!" (Autumn, 1958)
Leon Trotsky, "Diary in Exile" (Autumn, 1958)
Harold Rosenberg, "Twilight of the Intellectuals" (Summer, 1958)
Richard Lowenthal, "Our Peculiar Hell"—an essay on progress and ideology (Autumn, 1957)
Norman Mailer, "The White Negro" (Summer, 1957)

Each of the above issues is available to you at:

50¢ each — — three for $1.00 — — all nine for $4.00

Send your order to: DISSENT, 509 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.
Indicate the issue you want by the date only!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED